SYMBOLISM IN THE
INTERIOR CASTLE OF SAINT TERESA OF AVILA

BY

SISTER MARIETTA MAHONEY, S. N. D.
A. B., Emmanuel College, '43
M. A., Boston College, '51

DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE DEPARTMENT
OF THEOLOGY AT FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK
1972

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

JULY 20 19 71

This dissertation prepared under my direction by

MARIETTA MAHONEY, S.N.D.

entitled SYMBOLISM IN THE *INTERIOR CASTLE* OF ST. TERESA OF AVILA

has been accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY

Ewert H. Cousins
(*Faculty Adviser*)

XUM

PLEASE NOTE:

Some pages may have
indistinct print.
Filmed as received.

University Microfilms, A Xerox Education Company

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. INTRODUCTION. 1

II. SAINT TERESA OF AVILA AND THE INTERIOR CASTLE. 20

III. THE SYMBOL OF THE CASTLE. 35

IV. THE SYMBOL OF THE SPOUSE. 82

V. SUBSIDIARY TERESIAN SYMBOLS. 113

VI. TERESIAN SPIRITUALITY AS EMBODIED IN THE CHIEF SYMBOLS. 139

VII. CONCLUSION. 202

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 210

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The present study is an exposition of the theology of union with God as seen in the symbols employed by the mystic, Saint Teresa of Avila. It is not intended as a study of symbolism nor as a treatise on mysticism; rather is it an exploration, through symbols, of Teresa's spiritual doctrine with specific focus on her charism of wisdom, that is, her special gift for leading Christians to an effective, sanctifying union with God.

Our study will explore the inner life of Teresa as revealed in her book of the Interior Castle,[1] the work which culminates, and, in a sense, summarizes the doctrine contained in her other treatises to which we will have occasion to refer.[2] Our study of the Interior Castle grew out of the desire to explore in depth the theological meaning of the divine indwelling, that is, the fact of human fulfillment in Christ, or the Pauline notion of "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me."[3]

---

[1] Santa Teresa, Moradas del Castillo Interior, Vol. II: Obras Completas, ed. Efren de la Madre de Dios (3 Vols; Madrid, 1954).

[2] In particular, Libro de La Vida, Vol. I: Ibid. and Camino de Perfección, Vol. II.

[3] Gal. 2, 20.

Although the contemporary emphasis on personalism and self-fulfillment initiated some of our research, the focus of the thesis is on the universal spiritual experience of divine union rather than on special contemporary problems such as the tension between the self and God or the question of the active versus the contemplative ways of the spirit. Our concentration is on the mystery of sanctity, on new life in Christ, on the gospel paradox of finding oneself in losing oneself in Christ.[1]

In undertaking our study we are pursuing a recurrent theme in the works of Romano Guardini.[2] Guardini has often indicated that the writings of the Fathers, of the masters of the spiritual life, and of the mystics contain much unexplored data on the mystery of the God-man relationship. Little theological investigation of the inner life of the saints seems to have been made for the purpose of probing the human experience of the divine indwelling and the consequent identification of the personality of Christ with that of the Christian.[1] We believe that a study of mystical experience in its concrete presentation can shed much light on the process of "putting on Christ" thereby to become one's perfect self.[2]

---

[1] Mt. 10, 39; 16, 25; Mk. 8, 36. It is to be noted that the word "life," psyche in these passages might be translated "soul," "self," or "person." Perhaps the ego of contemporary psychology comes closest to a one word translation of psyche in this context. Cf. The New Testament of the Jerusalem Bible. (General ed., Alexander Jones: New York, 1967) p. 43, note "m".

[2] Romano Guardini, The Faith and Modern Man. trans. Charlotte Forsyth, (New York, 1952) pp. 127-138; The Focus of Freedom. trans. Gregory Roettiger, (Baltimore, 1966) pp. 7, 115, 154-159; The Humanity of Christ. trans. Ronald Walls, (New York, 1963) pp. xv-xvii; The World and the Person. trans. Stella Lang, (Chicago, 1965) pp. 141-169.

For research on this phenomenon of the "interiorization" of the Christian personality we have chosen Saint Teresa of Avila chiefly because she presents in a clear and forceful way the experience of the union of the self and Christ. Research in this area is facilitated by the fact that Teresa has left us a detailed account of her personal experience of the divine indwelling. However, she communicated her experience chiefly through symbols. Especially in the Interior Castle is there a clear presentation of the inner structure and meaning of human relationship with God in Christ. This entire mystical treatise is constructed by means of two major symbols: the castle of the soul and the spiritual marriage of the soul with God. With the combination of these two symbols Teresa has penetrated the mystery of the personal presence of God to man:

---

[1] Guardini, The Humanity of Christ, p. xv: "If we are to go any further than the usual abstract applications; if Christ's actions, sufferings, behavior and attitudes are to illumine and guide our human existence; if the idea of the 'new man' who is 'being changed into (the) likeness (of the glory of God)' /2 Cor. 2, 18/ is to acquire a definite, inspirational content, then this image must be made more concrete than is usually the case. . . . In this connection, we may dwell for a moment on the phenomenon on which research might well try itself out and from which it could perhaps deduce many of the concepts it will need. This phenomenon is the saint and the life of his soul. . .".

[2] Cf. Jean Guitton, Jesus: The Eternal Dilemma (New York, 1938) p. 320: "Then it can be seen vividly that they (the saints) are rays or prolongations of Jesus. They do not imitate his inferior life. For Jesus had a hidden existence in which he was alone with the Father, and this was the type of the relationship we could have with him. In a sense this relationship marks the concrete man. . ."

> I began to think of the soul as if it were a castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there were many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions . . . and in the center and midst of them all is the chiefest mansion where the most secret things pass between God and the soul.[1]
>
> . . .
>
> Perhaps when Saint Paul says: "He who is joined to God becomes one spirit with Him" (1 Cor. 6, 17) he is referring to this sovereign Marriage which presupposes the entrance of His Majesty into the soul by union.[2]

---

[1] Las Moradas, I, i, 1-3: "Se me ofreció . . . considerar nuestra alma como un castillo todo de un diamante u muy claro cristal, adonde hay muchos aposentos, ansí como en el cielo hay muchas moradas . . . y en el centro y mitad de todas éstas tiene la más principal, que es adonde pasan las cosas de mucho secreto entre Dios y el alma." The English quotations from the Interior Castle are from the translation of E. Allison Peers, The Complete Works of St. Teresa of Avila. (3 Vols. New York, 1944). The Spanish texts are from the edition of Efren de la Madre de Dios, OCD, Santa Teresa de Jesús: Obras Completas. (3Vols. Madrid, 1964). Throughout this dissertation references will be to these two sources with the precise work indicated as Moradas, Vida, or Camino together with the book, chapter or paragraph numbers.

[2] Ibid., VII, ii, 5: "Quizá es esto lo que dice San Pablo: 'El que se arrima y allega a Dios, Hácese un espíritu con El,' tocando este Matrimonio que presupone haverse llegado Su Majestad a el alma por unión."

Methodology

Our research rests upon certain presuppositions with regard to the nature of symbolism, namely: 1) the symbol's natural coherence with human experience; 2) the symbol's function in expressing religious experience; 3) the historical and cultural universality and objectivity of symbolic usage; 4) the symbol's power both to synthesize and diffuse meanings, to reveal and to conceal meaning. We have based these assumptions upon the findings of scholars such as Mircea Eliade,[1] Rudolf Otto,[2] and Gerardus Van der Leeuw[3] in the field of primitive religious symbolism, and upon the work of Jean Danielou,[4] Karl Rahner,[5] Paul Tillich[6] and Gerald Vann[7] in modern theological symbolism.

---

[1] Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return. trans. Willard R. Trask, (New York, 1959); Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism. trans. Philip Mairet, (New York, 1961); Patterns in Comparative Religion. trans. Rosemary Sheed, (Cleveland, 1963); The Sacred and the Profane. trans. Willard R. Trask, (New York,1961).

[2] The Idea of the Holy (New York, 1968).

[3] Religion in Essence and Manifestation. (2 Vols. New York, 1963); Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art. (New York, 1963).

[4] From Shadows to Reality (Westminster, Md., 1960); God and the Ways of Knowing (New York, 1957); Primitive Christian Symbols (Baltimore, 1964); "The Problem of Christian Symbolism," Thought, 25 (1950), 423-440.

[5] Theological Investigations. (6 Vols. Baltimore, 1961-'69) Vol. IV.

[6] Systematic Theology. (3 Vols. Chicago, 1967) Vol. I.

[7] The Eagle's Word (New York, 1961): Myth, Symbol and Revelation (Washington, D.C., 1961); The Paradise Tree: On Living the Symbols of the Church (New York, 1959); The Water and the Fire (New York, 1961).

The Symbol's Natural Coherence with Human Experience

Karl Rahner establishes a basic principle for an ontology of symbolism when he says: "All beings are by their nature symbolic, because they necessarily 'express' themselves in order to attain their nature."[1] Rahner defines the symbol as one reality which renders another reality present, that is, "the representation which allows the other 'to be there' "[2] He bases his philosophy of the symbol upon the notion of the "self-proclamation of things," which, in the broadest and most original sense constitutes symbolism. Rahner thus establishes the fact that the symbol shares in the *analogia entis* of the being which it symbolizes.[3] Since this is notably a fact in the case of mystical experience it should follow that our study of the symbols used by the mystic will bring the human experience of union with God into sharper focus. Since symbols participate in the reality which they express, reflection on these symbols from many points of view will make this reality more fully manifest.

The Symbol's Function in Expressing Religious Experience

The symbol is that which expresses for man the mysteries of life. Birth, death, marriage, union with the divine-- all of life's deepest realities are known, experienced and expressed on the level of symbolism. Human inspiration, even divine revelation, finds no more adequate presentation of religious truth than through the use of symbols.[1] Man's aspirations toward God and God's Self-gift to man are first symbolic realities and then fulfilled events.[2] Karl Rahner concludes that in a theology of symbols the self-communication of God to man "is given to man and grasped by him in the symbol which does not represent an absent and merely promised reality but exhibits this reality as something present, by means of the symbol found in it."[3]

---

[1] Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*. Vol. IV. p. 224.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 225.

Mystical experience, therefore, would seem to be more effectively revealed by symbols than by abstractions and conceptualizations. By the same token, without presuming to penetrate the mysteries of the experience as deeply as the mystic herself, we should find research on the symbols used by the mystic a fruitful means of penetrating the reality of the experience of divine-human union. The mystical experience itself is symbolic.[4] It is the expression of the God-man encounter. Here the symbol is the embodiment of mystery, that is, of the mysterion, the content of man's personal relationship with God. Thus a basis for studying symbols as a means of penetrating Teresa's mystical experience of union with God lies in the nature of the religious experience and its coherence with symbolic expression.[1]

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 232-235.

[2] Cf. Gerald Vann, OP, The Eagle's Word (New York, 1961), pp. 35-36.

[3] K. Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. IV, p. 235.

[4] In the sense that the symbol is the point of articulation for the experience of divine-human union.

The Historical and Cultural Universality and the Objectivity of Symbolic Usage

In the mythology, art, folklore, poetry and fairy-tales of all cultures; in Bible, nursery rhyme, fiction and fantasy; in dreams, and even in the psychedelic "trip," mankind recognizes the same recurring symbols. As Carl Jung has indicated,[2] symbols have some definite connection with the very structure of the human psyche, since the same symbols hold for all men some permanent intellectual and emotional content. Symbols can be archetypal and thus bring men to a common understanding on that level which is specifically human because it is a level common to all humanity in content as well as in style.

Symbols, therefore, by their nature, already have their meaning at the moment of their recognition by the human mind.[3] Man does not create symbols; he discovers them. In the symbol, a man "comes upon" meaning, meaning which he shares with his fellowmen--even those of different cultures and epochs.

---

[1] Cf. Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol. I, p. 239.

[2] Cf. Carl Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, Vol. 12 of Collected Works, p. 270.

[3] C. Jung, "Our Psychological Energy", in Vol. 10 of Collected Works, p. 48: "Symbols were never devised consciously, but were always produced out of the unconscious by way of revelation or intuition."

Because there exists this deep-rooted connection between the symbol, its meaning, its expression and its universal recognition, the symbol constitutes a valid medium for our research on the mystical experience. Given the intimate relationship between symbol and meaning, expression and experience, the study of Teresa's symbols should lead to a richer knowledge of her spiritual doctrine.

The Symbol's Power Both to Synthesize and Diffuse Meanings, to Reveal and Conceal Meaning

If the symbol holds meaning, it also hides it. Paradoxically, too, it creates meaning, an entire series of meanings. According to Mircea Eliade,[1] one of the characteristics of the symbol is the many senses it presents in one unified whole:

> This function of unification is certainly of considerable importance . . . Whatever its context, a symbol always reveals the basic oneness of several zones of the real.
>
> . . . .
>
> This "unification" is in no sense a confusion; the symbolism makes it possible to move from one level to another, and one mode of existence to another, bringing them all together, but never merging them. We must realize that the tendency of each to become the whole is really a tendency to fit the "whole" into a single system, to reduce the multiplicity of things to a single "situation" in such a way as to make it as comprehensible as it can be made.[2]

The power of the symbol to reveal many meanings at once gives it both a unifying and a revelatory function. At the same time this empowers the symbol to conceal its meaning. The symbol communicates its many levels of meaning in an intuitive flash. The addressee may grasp only some of these levels of meaning or he may grasp them only intuitively. This intuitive knowledge can be enhanced by reflective articulation. Our research, then, will have the two-fold purpose of 1) bringing the many levels of context to bear on the Teresian symbols so that we may see their revelatory and unifying power in presenting the experience of union with God in Christ; and 2) making conscious by reflective analysis the depth of meaning grasped intuitively from the symbol in its literary context, the Interior Castle.

---

[1] Patterns in Comparative Religion, pp. 451-453.

[2] Ibid.

Teresa's Mystical Symbolism

In the Interior Castle Teresa's symbolism is at once most intense, varied and unified. It objectifies the single truth: "Our life is Christ."[2] On this single truth all her symbols converge. The two major symbols,

---

[1] In the exploration of religious symbolism as a manifestation of religious experience and a means of religious development, we have followed the lead of a fellow-student at Fordham University. Sister Lillian Turney, CDP, in her dissertation, The Symbolism of the Temple in Bonaventure's "Itinerarium mentis in Deum," (unpublished Ph. D dissertation, Department of Theology, Fordham University, 1968) established a precedent for theological research on the symbol's function to unite man to the Sacred and to express his desire for and experience of such union. Especially are we indebted to Sister Lillian for the basis of our research on the temple symbol; cf. Chapter III of the present dissertation.

[2] Col. 3, 3; cf. Moradas, V, ii, 4.

the castle and the Spouse, become one symbol of the divine indwelling: "The soul becomes fully aware that another Lord greater than itself, is governing that castle."[1] The spirit of God dwells in the soul-castle making it "that celestial building. . . so little understood by mortals, although so many of them frequent it."[2] To frequent this celestial building is, according to Teresa, so to live on the level of symbolic reality as to understand something of the mystery of the divine indwelling.[3] Mystical experience is not a matter of seeking God within by means of thought or imagination (although, Teresa admits, "this is an excellent habit for it is founded upon a truth -- namely that God is within us.")[4] Rather does God himself raise the soul to that degree of contemplation where "love must already be awake;"[5] that is to say, where spiritual awareness is above natural thought and imagination where symbolic experience is the pure gift of God.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, iii, 18: "Ve bien el alma que otro mayor Señor govierna aquel castillo que ella. . ."

[2] Moradas, I, ii, 7: ". . . este artificio celestial interior tan poco entendido de los mortales aunque vayan muchos por él."

[3] Moradas, V, ii, 4: " Esta casa querría dar entender aquí, que es Cristo. En una parte me parece he leído u oído que nuestra vida está ascondida en Cristo u en Dios-- que todo es uno-- u que nuestra vida es Cristo."

[4] Ibid., IV, iii, 3: "Bueno es esto y excelente. . . porque se funda sobre verdad, que lo es estar Dios dentro de nosotros mesmos."

[5] Ibid., ii, 4.

With the single image of the castle-dwelling of the divine Spouse, Teresa has expounded a spiritual doctrine which is not systematic but symbolic. Our method in studying her symbolism takes its pattern from her own use of the symbol. By successive penetration of the one image on many levels she has elaborated a theology of the divine presence, returning again and again to the same idea, intensifying it until the endless variety and the extreme personalism of humanity's union with God shares something of the clarity of her symbol.

By successive penetration of the many levels of meaning in the castle-Spouse symbol, we hope to elucidate Teresa's spiritual doctrine. Therefore, we shall view the castle-Spouse symbol 1) in its basic structure as symbol which is in some sense universal, 2) in its historical shaping, that is, in the Judeo-Christian tradition which was Teresa's heritage, 3) in its shaping by the immediate cultural environment of sixteenth century Spain, and 4) in its particular development through the personal religious experience of Teresa of Avila. Finally, we shall analyze the symbols of the Interior Castle for the light that they shed not only on Teresian spirituality but upon Christian spirituality as a whole.

---

[1] Ibid., 6: "Que no es esta cosa que se puede antojar, porque por diligencias que hagamos, no lo podemos adquirir, y en ello mesmo se ve no ser de nuestro metal, sino de aquel purísimo oro de la sabiduría divina."

Hence our method consists in an investigation of the historical, theological, cultural and psychological sources of Teresa's two-fold basic symbol: the temple-castle and the spiritual marriage. We hope to show that Teresa's symbolism articulates an "image theology." Her symbols present the human life-task of recreating man in the image of God. Teresa's symbolism continues, refines, and deepens the common human experience and expression of the reality of God's redemptive presence to and in his rational creatures. The personalistic dimension of the presence of God in and through man, as the most powerful element in Christian spirituality is richly expressed in the castle-Spouse symbol.

Previous Studies in Teresian Symbolism

To date, only a few studies on the works of Saint Teresa have treated of her symbols.[1] Of these the most valuable are Gaston Etchegoyen's L'Amour divin. Essai sur les sources de Ste. Therese[2] and Rodolphe Hoornaert's Saint Teresa in Her Writings.[3] Now outdated in view of modern studies in symbolism, is Sánchez-Moguel's El Lenguaje de Santa Teresa de Jesús.[4] Three more recent works which concentrate on Teresian symbolism are the article, "El concepto del alma humana en 'Las Moradas' de Santa Teresa,"[1] in the fourth centenary commemorative issue of Revista de Espiritualidad, the very brief but informative essay by Robert Ricard, "Quelques remarques sur 'Las Moradas' de Ste. Therese D'Avile et le symbolism du château interieur;"[2] and the little work by Sor M. Magdalena Izquierdo Luque, Santa Teresa de Jesús. Metáforas y símbolos.[3]

---

[1] Cf. María Jimenez-Salas. Santa Teresa de Jesús: Bibliografía fundamental. (Madrid, 1962); Otilio del Niño Jesús. "Bibliografía Teresiana," Obras Completas. Efren de la Madre de Dios, ed. (Madrid, 1951), Vol. I, pp. 25-217.

[2] Paris, 1923

[3] London, 1931.

[4] Madrid, 1915.

These studies have been made from the point of view of historical sources, cultural influences and literary criticism. But to our knowledge no study has concentrated on Teresian symbolism from the point of view of spiritual theology. Our interest lies in the function of the Teresian images in delineating the personal, empirical features of the supernatural experience of union with God in Christ-- experience which transcends expression and yet enjoys a certain concretization in symbolism. Through the study of symbolism we hope to penetrate more deeply the experience of union which Teresa presented in the Interior Castle.

Secondary sources for this study have been chosen for 1) the value of their basic contribution to Teresian scholarship; 2) their focus on the nature and development of religious symbolism; and 3) the light they shed on the history, theology, and psychology of Christian spirituality:

---

[1] By Martín de Jesús María. Revista de Espiritualidad. Vol. XXII, Nos. 87-89 (1963) 203-214.

[2] Bulletin hispanique, 47 (1945) 187-198.

[3] Madrid, 1963.

1) The two modern editors of the complete works of Teresa of Avila, Silverio de Santa Teresa[1] and Efren de la Madre de Dios,[2] provide sound critical notes upon which to base our theological research. Most useful for the historical and cultural orientation of our study are the well-known works of the pioneer English scholar of Spanish mysticism, E. Allison Peers.[3] Pere Marie Eugene's outline of the doctrine of the Interior Castle[4] attempts to systematize the spiritual doctrine of Teresa according to the classical models of the spiritual life. This work has been outstripped by the recent study of the mysticism of Saint Teresa and of Saint John of the Cross by E. W. Trueman Dicken.[5]

---

[1] Obras Completas de Santa Teresa. 4th ed. (3 Vols. Burgos, 1949).

[2] Santa Teresa de Jesus: Obras Completas. (3 Vols. Madrid, 1951-54). Contains an extensive Teresian bibliography prepared by Padre Otilio del Nino Jesus and a biography of Teresa by Efren de la Madre de Dios. This edition of the saint's complete works constitutes a modern revision of the original texts with copious critical notes.

[3] Handbook to the Life and Times of Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross. (Westminster, Md., 1954); Mother of Carmel (New York, 1946); Saint Teresa of Jesus and Other Essays and Addresses, (London, 1953); Studies in the Spanish Mystics. (2 Vols. 2nd ed. New York, 1951).

[4] I Want to See God, (Vol. I); I Am a Daughter of the Church, (Vol. II) (Chicago, 1953-55).

[5] The Crucible of Love. (New York, 1963).

2) The works of Jean Danielou, Mircea Eliade, Gerardus van der Leeuw, and Gerald Vann[1] have been consulted for their insights on the universality of religious symbols and the relationship between symbol and meaning. Some generic notions on symbolism, as in this first chapter, are based upon the philosophy and theology of symbols in the work of Karl Rahner and Paul Tillich.[2]

3) Since Teresa's ultimate single source of symbolism is Sacred Scripture we have turned to the writing of some of the early Fathers[3] and medieval mystics[4] for a study of their use of and commentaries on the biblical symbols of the temple and the spiritual marriage. These writings, together with those of a few of Teresa's Spanish contemporaries[5] have been our main source for the historical and theological development of the symbols.

For the psychological aspect of symbolism we turned to the depth psychology of Carl Jung[6] and to Abraham Maslow's psychology of being.[1] Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and Maslow's "peak-experience" shed some light upon the mystical experience and its symbolic expression.

---

[1] Cf. notes p. 5, above.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Origen, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Augustine.

[4] Saint Bernard, Jan van Ruysbroek, Ramon Lull.

[5] Francisco de Osuna, Bernardino de Laredo, Pedro de Alcántara.

[6] The Collected Works of C. G. Jung. (London, 1953-'69_: Vol. 5, Symbols of Transformation; Vol. 9, The Collective Unconsciousness; Vol. 12, Psychology and Alchemy.

Organization of the Study

Our study of the mystical symbols of Saint Teresa and their precise revelation of the inner structure of human fulfillment in Christ will be according to the following order:

The present introductory chapter will be followed by a summary of the biography and works of Teresa of Avila with a general consideration of the Interior Castle. This will constitute the material of Chapter II.

Chapter III will trace the development of the symbol of the castle from its roots in the "center" and temple symbols of natural religion, through its use in Sacred Scripture and Christian tradition, to its refinement as the psychological symbol for the self seeking fulfillment through union with divinity.

In Chapter IV we shall follow the development of the image of the spiritual marriage, seeing evidence of its origin in humanity's earliest grasp of the creature-Creator relationship in the "wedding of heaven and earth." More concretely, we shall see this symbol's origin in Scripture, especially in the Song of Songs whose imagery was so well utilized by the Fathers and by the Christian mystics. We shall note, finally, the marriage symbol's subtle psychological implications as the expression of human self-fulfillment through union with "the Other."

---

[1] Toward a Psychology of Being. (2nd ed. Princeton, 1958); Religion, Values and Peak Experiences. (Columbus, 1964).

Chapter V will present a brief study of the subsidiary Teresian symbols, the images of light and water, of transition and union, which serve to increase the effectiveness of the castle-Spouse symbolism, and which further relate Teresa's writings to the mystical works of all ages and to the common pursuit of human perfection in the divine-human relationship.

In Chapter VI we shall explore the essence of Teresa's spirituality as embodied in the merging of the two major images, the interior castle and the spiritual marriage. We shall note her emphasis on the dimension of personalism: In the "center" of the castle of the soul dwells the King whose invitation to the spouse stresses both the divine initiative and the human response and receptivity. With Saint Teresa we shall discover that there is a sense in which God inhabits every human soul: that the God-relationship creates the absolute meaning and dignity of the human personality, a fact subtly conveyed by the castle-spouse symbolism.

In our conclusion, Chapter VII, we hope through the study of Teresian symbolism to have arrived at a richer understanding of Christian perfection or fulfillment in God. By studying the chief symbols of the Interior Castle we hope to have taken a step in the direction of "interiorizing" Christian existence, of presenting Christ as more than teacher, model or leader. According to the symbols employed by Teresa of Avila, Christ is not a separate, transcendent reality above any particular soul, but the personality whose Spirit penetrates the soul's humanity, divinizing it from within, vitalizing it in its own exterior historical and environmental setting, opening it to the Trinity and to the whole of creation so that the human person becomes his true and unique self.

CHAPTER II

SAINT TERESA OF AVILA AND THE INTERIOR CASTLE

The life of Teresa de Ahumada is perhaps the best known of all biographies of women saints. It is also the most absorbing of biographies. This is not due simply to the fact that Saint Teresa's was a very eventful and fruitful life when compared to the sheltered life of women and of religious in her day. Nor is it due primarily to the fact that she was an intellectual woman in an age and culture in which women were not given much formal education. Rather is it due to the fact that each of her writings, not only the autobiography, reveals the vibrant personality of the saint, the inner life of the spirit, the depths of soul that constituted the woman, the religious, the foundress, the doctor of the mystical life.

Born in Avila, in 1515, of *hidalgo* parentage, Teresa was professed as a Carmelite nun in the convent of the Incarnation at Avila in 1537. The first twenty years of her religious life, she tells us,[1] were marred by what she considered grave imperfections. Only the grace of persevering in mental prayer sustained her during these tepid years which were marked by extremely ill health and by many "worldly" influences.

---

[1] *Vida,* VII and VIII.

In retrospect, the saint ascribed the effects of these less noble influences to her own spiritual immaturity as well as to a general relaxation of discipline in the religious life of her day.[1] But Teresa's inspiration for the Discalced Reform was born of this sad experience.

Her spiritual renewal, which she attributes solely to the mercy and grace of God,[2] inaugurated the series of mystical graces which henceforth marked her life and work. Under the direction of Jesuit confessors from the College of St. Giles at Avila,[3] she was able to recognize a developing awareness of the divine presence within her--the experience of which she was to describe so clearly in the Interior Castle. With this vivid awareness of God's presence she progressed through the stages of the "prayer of quiet"[4] and the "prayer of union"[5] being favored frequently by supernatural locutions and visions.

Among the many manifestations of divine union granted to her during this period of her life a certain climax seems to have been reached in the symbol of the "transverberation" of her heart, experienced probably for the first time in 1559:

---

[1] Vida, VII, 5: "Y no sé de que nos espantamos haya tantos males en la Iglesia, pues los que havían de ser los dechados para que todo sacasen virtudes tienen tan borrada la labor que el espíritu de los Santos pasados dejaron en las relisiones. Plega la Divina Majestad ponga remedio en ello, como ve que es menester. Amén."

[2] Ibid.

[3] Padres Diego de Cetina, Juan de Pradanos, Baltasar Alvarez. Cf. Vida, XXIII y XXIV; also E. Allison Peers, Handbook of the Life and Times of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. p. 6.

[4] Vida, XVII.

[5] Ibid., XVII and XIX.

> An arrow is driven into the heart so that the soul does not know either what is the matter with it or what it desires. . . . It sees clearly that this love has come to it through no act of its own, but that, from the exceeding great love which the Lord bears it, a spark seems suddenly to have fallen upon it and to have set it wholly on fire. . . . so excessive was the sweetness caused me by this intense pain that one can never wish to lose it, nor will one's soul be content with anything less than God.[1]

Among the special graces of her life Teresa counted personal contact with some of the spiritual leaders of her day--men whom she instinctively recognized as saints: Francis Borgia, Peter of Alcántara, John of the Cross. Saint Francis Borgia was one of the first to assure her that she was "very evidently being led by the spirit of God."[2] Saint Peter of Alcántara, the eccentric Franciscan reformer, inspired the courage with which Teresa undertook the reform of her own Order. Saint John of the Cross became her co-worker in the Reform of Carmel.

Teresa's original idea, for what was in the divine plan her special vocation, was the foundation of a house of strict observance--a convent at Avila in which a small group of Carmelite nuns could pursue a more ascetical life than the one they lived at the Convent of the Incarnation. Teresa proposed the restoration of the primitive rule of Carmel.

---

[1] Vida, XXIX: "Hincan una saeta en lo más vivo de las entrañas y corazón a las veces que no sabe el alma que ha ni que quiere. . . . ve claro que no movió ella por donde viniese este amor, sino que de el muy grande el Señor la tiene parece cayó de presto aquella centella en ella que, la hace toda arder. . . . Era tan grande el dolor que me hacía dar aquello quejido y tan excesiva la suavidad que me pone este grandísimo dolor que no hay desear que se quite ni se contenta el alma con menos que Dios." Cf. Efren de la Madre de Dios, "Biografía de Santa Teresa," Obras Completas, Vol. I, pp. 404-408.

[2] Vida, XXIII.

XUM

This, in her own words, was "the rule of Our Lady of Carmel. . . without mitigation, in the form drawn up by Fray Hugo, Cardinal of Santa Sabina, and given in the year 1248."[1] The austerity of this rule was typified by the word "discalced," later applied as a title to the Reform.

The year 1562 saw the first foundation of the Reform, Saint Joseph's Convent at Avila. Peter of Alcántara was instrumental in obtaining ecclesiastical approval for this new Carmel where Teresa and six companions began to live according to the rule which grants to Teresa the title, Mother of Carmel. Teresa characterized her first years in this convent as "the most restful years of my life."[2] During this time she wrote her autobiography, at the command of her confessor, Padre García de Toledo, O. P.,[3] and began the little treatise on the Our Father, the Way of Perfection.

In 1567, the Father General of the Carmelite Order, Juan Bautista Rubeo, authorized Saint Teresa to found further convents of the Reform as well as two monasteries of Discalced Carmelite Friars.[4] The Book of the Foundations, which Teresa wrote during the last nine years of her life (1573-82), tells the story of her seventeen foundations. It is a story of wearying travel, frustrating opposition, and discouraging setbacks. But it is also the story of inspiring courage, strong spiritual friendships, and final success in her vocation as Foundress of the Discalced Carmelites.

---

[1] Ibid., XXXVI.

[2] Las Fundaciones, I.

[3] Cartas, III

[4] Las Fundaciones, II.

The magnitude of Saint Teresa's trials stretched from opposition from her superiors and from the citizens of Avila (on the occasion of the first foundation) to the imprisonment (in 1577) of her spiritual son and master, Saint John of the Cross, co-founder of the monasteries of the Reform. Not the least of her extraordinarily difficult assignments was the interruption of her labors as foundress in order to serve as prioress of the Convent of the Incarnation (1571-74). This was the Carmel of her first twenty years as a religious, the convent she had left, some eight years earlier, to found the first house of the strict observance.

To appreciate the strain of her appointment as prioress, both on the saint and on the one-hundred and thirty sisters of the community of the Incarnation, does not require too great an imagination. The community was living under the mitigated rule which Saint Teresa had renounced, and the convent had deteriorated both spiritually and materially. The peace and joy which the saint restored to this community within her first months as prioress attest to the natural charm of her personality and to the supernatural depth of her character as well as to her rare ability for government.[1]

---

[1] Cf. "Dichos de Santa Teresa: Avila Encarnación, octubre 1571-julio de 1573." Obras Completas, Vol. III, pp. 875-876.

Even before the close of her triennium as prioress, Teresa took up again the arduous task of foundations of the Discalced Reform. Twice elected prioress at Saint Joseph's, Avila, and serving an interim period as prioress of the convent at Medina, the saint continued the writing of the Foundations and (in 1577) composed the Interior Castle. All this was interspersed with the travels and negotiations necessitated by the work of the new foundations (which continued to be complicated by strong opposition from within and outside the Order), and the visitation of the houses already established. Illness, the constant companion of her religious life, continued to be confronted by her characteristic gaiety of spirit and undaunted fortitude.

Persecution of the Reform continued until almost the end of Saint Teresa's life. In 1580, a bull of Pope Gregory XIII recognized the Discalced Carmelites as a province separated from the old Order of Carmel. The separation became operative in the following year when Father Jerónimo Gracián,[1] the saint's confessor and spiritual director, was appointed provincial of the Discalced Carmelites.

---

[1] The name of Father Gracián (Jerónimo de la Madre de Dios) and those of the friends and confessors mentioned above bring to mind the profound personal influences on Teresa's life to which she refers frequently in her writings. Especially in the Vida Teresa pays tribute to these men and expresses her gratitude to the divine Providence which sent her trusted directors and confessors. Cf., for example, Vida, XXXIV, 13: "Que como el Señor sabía en los travajos que me havía de llevar consigo a algunos que me gobernavan, quedasen otros que me han ayudado a hartos travajos y hecho gran bien." While the scope of the present work permits no detailed account of the great men of God who figured in Teresa's biography, both spiritual and literary influences on the saint's doctrine and symbolism will receive special attention in the following chapters.

Death came to Saint Teresa while she was still engaged in the travels and the work of the foundations. The final illness overtook her in 1582 at Alba de Tormes in the convent which she had founded there some ten years before. Eyewitness accounts of the death-bed scene are noteworthy for their simplicity.[1] The saint who was and is the most illustrious daughter of Carmel and of Spain died as a simple penitent, glorying not in the mystical heights of her soon-to-be consummated union with God, but rather in her title as daughter of the Church. To her religious sisters, the recipients of her lofty writings on prayer, her last recorded words are a simple exhortation to keep strictly to their rules and constitutions.[2] To her divine Spouse, the Object of the most sublime expressions of intimacy, her last words on earth were borrowed from the penitent psalmist: "A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not despise."[3]

To generations to come Teresa's prolific pen still speaks-- at times gaily, at times wearily, always profoundly and sublimely-- of the woman who was Teresa of Jesus, the mystic whose symbols lead the way to our grasp of the mystery of our being: It is Christ who operates in us through the strength of his life and death and resurrection.

---

[1] Cf. "Dichos de Santa Teresa," loc. cit., pp. 898-899.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Cf. "Extracts from the Depositions Taken from Sister Teresa of Jesus, Saint Teresa's Niece." (Avila, 1596) E. Alison Peers, The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus (3 Vols. New York, 1946), Vol. III, p. 368.

Teresa of Jesus was beatified by Pope Paul V, in 1614, and canonized in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV. In 1970, Pope Paul VI conferred upon her the title of Doctor of the Church.[1]

Her Writings

The intrinsic value of the many writings which merited for Teresa the honors of the Church and of the literary world was recognized from the beginning. Extant are the treasured autograph copies of her Life,[2] the Way of Perfection,[3] the Interior Castle,[4] the Book of the Foundations,[5] the Visitation of Convents,[6] many of the saint's Letters and some of her minor prose works.[7] Numerous early manuscript copies of the works of Teresa (some of them dating to the saint's lifetime) preserved in the national library at Madrid, in the Escorial and in the Carmelite monasteries of Spain also attest to the immediate appreciation of her writings.[1]

---

[1] Cf. Positio Specialis: Urbi et Orbi: Concessionis tituli Doctoris et extensionis eiusdem tituli ad universam Ecclesiam necnon Officii et Missae de Communi Doctorum Virginium, in honorem S. Teresiae Abulensis, Virginis, Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum Parentis. . . Cardinali Arcadio M. Larraona. Romae, Curia Gen. OCD, 1969.

The official declaration which added Teresa's name to the list of Doctors of the Church was made at solemn ceremonies in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome on October 27, 1970. (Rivista delle Religiose, U.S.M.I., October, 1970).

[2] Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial. Cf. Otilio del Niño Jesus, "Bibliografía Teresiana, "Obras Completas, Vol. I. p.29.

[3] Escorial, Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[4] Sevilla, Madres Carmelitas Descalzas. Ibid., p. 30.

[5] Escorial, Ibid.

[6] Escorial, Ibid., p. 31.

[7] Carmelitas Descalzas de Burgos, Guadalajara, etc., Ibid., p. 31.

Teresa's writings have been translated into every modern language, and studies of her mysticism come frequently from the pens of non-Catholic as well as Catholic scholars.[2]

As early as 1588, Fray Luis de León published a complete edition of the works of Saint Teresa.[3] This has been followed, down through the four centuries since her death, by numerous annotated and critical editions of the complete works. The most recent and best annotated of these--based on the original texts-- are that of Padre Silverio de Santa Teresa, OCD (the source best known to English readers through the scholarly translations of E. Allison Peers)[1] and that of Padre Efren de la Madre de Dios, OCD.[2]

---

[1] First redactions of the Vida are to be seen at the Carmelite Convent in Salamanca, and at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid; of the Camino, at the Escorial, Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid and at the Carmelite Convents in Madrid, Salamanca, and Toledo; of the Moradas, at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid and at the Carmelite Convent in Córdoba; of the Conceptos, at the Biblioteca Nacional and at the Carmelite Convent in Alba de Tormes; of the Fundaciones, at the Biblioteca Nacional and at the Biblioteca de la R. Academia de la Historia in Madrid and at the Carmelite Convent in Toledo; of some of the Cartas and Poesías at the Biblioteca Nacional.

[2] Otilio de Niño Jesús, op. cit., pp. 50-127.

[3] This important edition, by one who was an eminent religious, author and critic, was published at Salamanca by Guillermo Foquel. Fray Luis de León, OSA, a contemporary of Teresa (although he did not know her personally) gives exquisite testimony to the value of her life and works in his "Prologue" and in the "Letter of Dedication" to the Carmelites of the Monastery of Madrid. Cf. Obras Completas Castellanas de Fray Luis de León. Prólogos y notas del P. Felix García, OSA, (Tercera ed., Madrid, 1959)

The Interior Castle

Of the fifteen books or writings of Saint Teresa[3] the Interior Castle is the obvious choice for a study of her symbolism and its power to convey the reality of the divine indwelling.[4] In this book, written at the height of her spiritual and apostolic career, are summarized and perfected the key ideas of Teresian spirituality. Hers is a doctrine of active communion with the Lord who seeks to assimilate each man to himself. The entire book of the Interior Castle may be characterized as a treatise on the mystery of human perfection achieved through the union of man with God in Christ. Teresa is but developing a fundamental Christian doctrine: Christ is the very mystery of the divine-human relationship; in him is effected the mystery of all human transformation, as expressed in the Pauline text: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."[1]

---

[1] P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, OCD. Obras de Santa Teresa de Jesus. (4th ed. 3 Vols. Burgos, 1949).
E. Allison Peers. The Complete Works, cf. note 1, p. 4, Ch. I, above.

[2] Cf. note 1, p. 4, Ch. I, above.

[3] The writings of Saint Teresa of Avila include: Libro de la vida, Camino de perfección, Moradas, Cuentas de conciencia, Apuntaciones, Meditaciones sobre Los Cantares, Exclamaciones, Fundaciones, Constituciones, Visita de Descalzas, Avisos, Desafío espiritual, Vejamen, Poesías, Cartas.

[4] Since Teresa is best known to most readers through her Life, a brief explanation of the essential difference between the two works may be in order here: In a word, the essential difference lies in the symbolism of the castle (cf. Chs. III, IV, and VI, below). Whereas the Interior

Saint Teresa's elementary grasp of the psychology and theology of the spiritual life is evidenced in the simplicity and profundity of her symbol: the soul-castle, dwelling-place of the divine Spouse. The mystical number seven indicates infinite completeness or wholeness, the integrity and the limitless capacity of the "mansions" of the human spirit.[2]

The First Mansions open with a reflection on the perfection and dignity of the human person, made to the image and likeness of God. The reflection appropriately deepens to a consideration of the virtue of humility, the paradox of true self-esteem, upon which is built love of God and love of neighbor.

Self-evaluation leads one further into the interior castle. In the Second Mansions, the mansions of the practice of prayer, the activity of human-divine relationship begins and the soul knows the trials which accompany the determination to unite its will with the divine Will and to illustrate good faith by good works. Penance, recollection, and works of

---

Castle presents a concept of the soul as the "mansions" of the active love of God, the Life gives a broader, less precise, concept of the divine-human interaction. If in the Interior Castle God dwells in the soul, in the Life he operates-- as it were-- in an open, terrestrial landscape.

[1] Gal. 2, 20; cf. Moradas, V, vi, 9.

[2] For a fuller explanation of the symbolism of the number seven, cf. Ch. III, pp. 77-79, below.

charity help it to penetrate to the Third Mansions where the difficulties of self-conquest are matched by some "spiritual sweetness."[1] This is but an indication of the spiritual exaltation which God has reserved for those who with his grace persevere in the process of self-knowledge.

The Fourth Mansions of the soul are pervaded more by divine power than by human activity. Prayer becomes quiet, asceticism more passive as the human spirit becomes more and more aware of the divine Presence within it. Paradoxically, as the divine action overcomes human understanding and captivates the human will the soul "becomes more and more his own master."[2]

Human fulfillment progresses in proportion to self-surrender. Experience alone can assure one that he has penetrated to the Fifth Mansions where "union of the whole soul with God" is a certainty-- but a certainty beyond the powers of reason, imagination, or will. Saint Teresa describes this state best when she assures us of the soul's conscious certitude of the divine Self-gift-- a certitude which expresses itself in extending the divine gift to others. Human perfection in union with divinity cannot be self-centered. The proof of its reality is in the extension of this perfection into the lives of others.[3]

---

[1] III ii, 11.

[2] IV, iii, 9.

[3] V, iii, 1.

"A soul which has once set out to be the bride of God Himself, and has already had converse with His Majesty," must be prepared for great interior suffering before it realizes the divine Betrothal of the Sixth Mansions.[1] Yet, so near is it to the dwelling-place of God in the central and Seventh Mansion that it can "really taste the things of Heaven" and thus have great fortitude. Teresa's vivid description of interior trials and their exterior sources are matched only by her assurance of the inadequacy of "earthly consolations" in these mansions:

> The thing is inexpressible, for this distress and oppression are spiritual troubles and cannot be given a name. The best medicine--I do not say for removing the trouble, for I know of none of that, but for enabling the soul to endure it--is to occupy oneself with external affairs and works of charity and to hope in God's mercy which never fails those who hope in Him.[2]

The real dwelling-place of God is in the center of the soul of man. "For just as he has in Heaven, so must His Majesty have in the soul a room where He dwells alone," the Seventh Mansion. Here the Three Persons who are "one Substance and one Power and one Knowledge and one God alone. . . communicate themselves to the soul."[3] This union with the Triune God constitutes human perfection, human fulfillment.

---

[1] VI, i, 1.

[2] VI, i, 13: "¿Qué sabrá decir lo que ha? ; es indicible, porque son apretamientos y penas espirituales, que no se saben poner nombre. El mejor remedio--no digo para que se quite, que no le hallo, sino para que se pueda sufrir--es entender en las obras de caridad y esteriores y esperar en la misericordia de Dios, que nunca falta à los que en El esperan."

[3] VII, i, 6.

Saint Teresa's interior castle is both symbol and experience of the reality of a soul's intimate knowledge-love relationship with God. The upsurge of divine life from the innermost depths of the soul is, for Teresa, the act of God's dwelling in the Seventh Mansion of the interior castle, God's sending forth his impelling light and heat through the transparent walls of the castle and into the other "mansions" of the soul. Teresa's castle is more than the purely natural image or allegory. The contours of her spiritual edifice rise beyond the words which make the castle at one and the same time a sun-diffused globe, a single diamond, a many-chambered structure alive with supernatural light.[1] Words and experience, symbol and meaning are contemporaneous and reciprocal.

At times a proliferation of symbols renders Teresa's style less simple and reflective. The castle suffused with light has "deep inner springs." Symbols of water are interspersed with the symbols of light and of creaturely transition.[2] No permanent earthly figure can fully embody Teresa's thought. The castle is more than castle; its divine Inhabitant morethan source of light and of transforming life. The things of the spirit must always be thought of in terms of a plenitude, a breadth and grandeur which far outstrip human thought patterns.[3] The human spirit itself, as image of God, is the bearer of the revelation of the glory of God.[1] And this is the single purpose of the mystic's symbolism:[2] to let the glory of God shine forth in "those to whom God grants these favors, and who will rejoice and will awaken others to a fresh love of Him."[3]

---

[1] I, i, 3; II, 8.

[2] IV, ii, 6.

[3] I, ii, 8.

The seven mansions of the Interior Castle constitute at one and the same time the chapters of a mystical treatise and the "stages" of an intense spiritual life. They are also, in a special way, vistas on the mystery of life in Christ. The symbolism of the Interior Castle presents the mystery of the divine indwelling as a personal, individuating phenomenon. The Spouse dwelling in the interior castle images the mystery of Christ in the soul of Teresa of Avila--the mystery of divine life made visible in the symbol of God which is the life of the saint.

---

[1] I, i, 3.

[2] Ibid.

[3] I, i, 4.

CHAPTER III

THE SYMBOL OF THE CASTLE

Teresa does not propose to give a doctrinal or theological presentation of spirituality, nor (in the company of all the great mystics) does she expect to succeed in expressing in conceptual language her experience of the divine. Her purpose is solely to share this experience, as far as possible, on the deepest level of human communication. This is the intuitive level of symbolism.

Consciousness of union with God is so eminently in the category of ultimate reality that only symbols can grasp and present it. The mystical experience manifests itself in such contradictory ways--joy and pain, darkness and light, fruition and aridity; it is so much a divine ludus amoris, a human encounter with the coincidentia oppositorum of divinity, that it cannot be conveyed by concepts.[1] Only the multivalent symbol can embody it. Hence a study of the symbols of the Interior Castle deepens our understanding of, or better, places us at the center of mystical truth and its grasp of ultimate reality.

In our investigation of the power of the symbol to synthesize the exterior and interior worlds of man and thus to integrate the meaning and expression of human experience, we shall confine ourselves to the chief symbols employed by Teresa of Avila in the Interior Castle and, in particular, to the castle and spouse symbols by means of which Teresa presents the mystical experience of the divine indwelling.

---

[1] Cf. M. Eliade, Images and Symbols, p. 15.

In this chapter of our study it will be profitable to sketch a backdrop for the study of Teresa's basic symbol, the interior castle. We plan to explore the r[illegible]ional meaning of the symbol by situating it in the va[illegible]spects of its meaning will be revealed. Firs[illegible] universal structure by seeing it in the [illegible] and van der Leeuw.[1] Although their [illegible] religion, their research uncovers an esse[illegible] symbols, which structure remains as these symb[illegible]ormed in advanced civilizations.

In this context we shall study the interior castle as belonging to the universal class of the symbol of the center. Then we shall trace its history in the Judaic-Christian tradition as expressed in Sacred Scripture. We shall see the idea of human-divine encounter develop from the concept of sacred space to the artifacts of the house and temple, to the revelation of God's dwelling with man in the person of Jesus Christ, and thence, through his Spirit, in the Church and in each individual member of the Mystical Body.

---

[1] Cf. Ch. I, p. 5, above.

and expression of human experience, we shall confine ourselves to the chief symbols employed by Teresa of Avila in the Interior Castle and, in particular, to the castle and spouse symbols by means of which Teresa presents the mystical experience of the divine indwelling.

In this chapter of our study it will be profitable to sketch a backdrop for the study of Teresa's basic symbol, the interior castle. We plan to explore the multidimensional meaning of the symbol by situating it in the various contexts in which aspects of its meaning will be revealed. First we will explore its basic and universal structure by seeing it in the light of the research of Eliade and van der Leeuw.[1] Although their work is primarily in primitive religion, their research uncovers an essential structure in certain symbols, which structure remains as these symbols are transformed in advanced civilizations.

In this context we shall study the interior castle as belonging to the universal class of the symbol of the center. Then we shall trace its history in the Judaic-Christian tradition as expressed in Sacred Scripture. We shall see the idea of human-divine encounter develop from the concept of sacred space to the artifacts of the house and temple, to the revelation of God's dwelling with man in the person of Jesus Christ, and thence, through his Spirit, in the Church and in each individual member of the Mystical Body.

---

[1] Cf. Ch. I, p. 5, above.

We shall then trace the temple-soul image in Christian spiritual theology: in the writing of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and in the work of Christian mystics. It is this broad tradition to which Teresa is heir. Finally, we shall give special attention to the spiritual writers who were Teresa's contemporaries[1] and who served as direct influences and sources for her writing. We shall close the chapter by drawing on the research and theories of Carl Jung[2] to clarify additional aspects of the symbol.

The Symbol of the Dwelling Place

As Mircea Eliade and Geradus van der Leeuw have shown,[3] the development of the dwelling place as symbol followed the pattern of the human concept of power and life. Eliade's studies have illustrated the universality of the dwelling symbol. In both Cosmos and History and Patterns of Comparative Religion, Eliade has summarized his findings under the heading: "The Archetonic Symbolism of the Center." He shows how the notion of "Localization" of the divine power was connected, first of all, with the Sacred Mountain where heaven and earth meet, and which was situated at the center of the world; secondly, it is connected with every temple or palace which is also regarded as an axis mundi, or "the meeting point of heaven, earth, and hell."[1] The center, then, says Eliade, "is pre-eminently the zone of the sacred and of absolute reality."[2]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 16.

[2] Collected Works, especially, Vols. 5, 9, 11, 12.

[3] M. Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 20-65; G. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, Vol. II, pp. 393-402.

In the sacred center dwelt life, power, immortality. This is also the logic behind the location of such mythical sources of life as the fountain of youth and behind the religious notion of the pilgrimage to sacred places. It explains, too, every myth which presents man as the seeker of the road to the self, to the "center" of his being.[3] The temple is a sacred place, a construction enclosing divine power. Man himself is such a temple. He will find his true self at the center of his being where union with his Source and End transpires, where he is divinized because there, at the center, divinity dwells.

For primitive man architecture meant the enclosure of, or laying hold of, the hidden and the holy powers of earth.[4] As man at first found his sacred enclosures in nature itself, for example, in the cave, the forest and the mountain, so also did he recognize as such the man-made sanctuary. A house was an enclosure of power; it, too, harbored the holy. The art of building was a holy action connected with manifold

---

[1] Cosmos and History, pp. 12-17.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

[3] Eliade, Cosmos and History, pp. 17-21; Patterns, pp. 38-85.

[4] W. R. Lethaby, Architecture, Nature and Magic, (London, 1956), pp. 27-30.

XUM

rites and sacrifices. This was true of both temple and human dwelling. The temple was the house of God; but man's house also was a holy place, a seat of divine power and life; man's hearth was an altar.[1] House and temple were similar in their sacredness; each was an organic unity, the self-sufficient source of all that is essential for life; each was a shrine, a center of power, a world in itself.[2]

But eventually there came a point of alienation between house and temple. With the expansion of human knowledge and skill, man's world ceased to be all-sacred. The Earth was no longer the awesome territory of God once man found that he could master it in his own right. He began to differentiate the sacred from the secular. His house could no longer be a temple. It became a mere place of residence because the artisan wished to build it for himself as a symbol of his own power and dominion rather than of a mysterious sacred power. And as the separation between the sacred and the secular grew wider, the temple became a localized representation of the temple of the heavens not made by hands.[3] It was to give place to the "temple not built with hands," the temple which is Christ, God Incarnate, divine life and power eternally united to humanity for the healing and perfecting of human nature.[1] Humanity, itself the image of God, through the renovation of that image in Christ, became the dwelling place of God; the Church, the people of God, Christ's members became the habitation of the Spirit.[2]

---

[1] Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, Vol. I, pp. 60-64.

[2] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 397.

[3] Cf. W. R. Lethaby, op. cit., p. 30.

Van der Leeuw seizes upon mysticism as the way out of the dilemma of, on the one hand, man's need to build a dwelling place for God, and, on the other hand, the superfluity of a house for God:

> The God of mysticism needs no house, no more than do his servants. Each finds himself and the other in the holy of holies, in the cor cordium. The relationship between God and man no longer has extension. It needs neither space nor a roof. It has become a unity in the inmost part, where fixed contours can no longer be distinguished. The true Qa'aba, says the Mohammedan mystic, will be built in the hearts of the faithful.[3]

Van der Leeuw thus views the mystic, in counter-distinction to the non-mystic believer, as one who needs no "building" for the divine indwelling, no structure or visible symbol. The non-mystic, he argues, requires the temple and the visible or sacramental symbols of the presence and the power of God.

---

[1] Cf. Saint Paul's teaching: Eph. 1, 23; 2, 22; 3, 16-19; 4, 12-13, and note "m," Jerusalem Bible, p. 333: "Christ who is filled with the divine life fills Christians with it, Col. 2, 9, and in this way a Christian enters both the Church and the new cosmos which he helps to build and which is the total fulness of the total Christ."

[2] Cf. Eph. 2, 18: "Through him both of us /pagan and Jew/ have in the one Spirit our way to come to the Father," And "Lumen Gentium, #4, Documents of Vatican II, (Abbot and Gallagher, eds., New York, 1966) p. 17: "The Spirit dwells in the Church and in hearts of the faithful as in a temple (cf. Cor. 3, 16 and 6, 19)."

[3] Van der Leeuw, Sacred and Profane Beauty, p. 204.

It is our contention that the true Christian mystic is not faced with this option. He will have both his own heart (pure contemplation) and the Church (mystical body as well as sacramental symbol) as the dwelling place of God. Christ-centered mysticism, because it is based on the "image theology" of the early Church,[1] necessarily embraces the sacramental or symbolic order together with the formless order of pure contemplation.[2] It is true that the city of God, the new Jerusalem, needs no temple, "since the Lord God Almighty and the lamb" are its temple.[3] But while man journeys through the earthly Jerusalem, the building of the "house" of God must go on. The Church of Christ, the "building" which he erected upon a rock foundation,[4] with himself as "the precious cornerstone," goes on constructing itself of "living stones making a spiritual house."[5]

We shall observe that Saint Teresa of Avila stresses this Christo-centric and ecclesial character of mystical union;[6] she insists that the mystical and most perfect union with God depends upon the reality of the sacred humanity of Christ who is the embodiment of the

---

[1] Cf., for example, Origen, p. 51, below.

[2] Cf. Teresa, Moradas, VI, vii, 6-16; also pp. 158-160, below.

[3] Rev. 21, 22.

[4] Mt. 16, 18.

[5] 1 Pet. 2, 4-6.

[6] Cf. Ch. VI, p. 158, below.

God-man relationship, the "Sacrament" of the encounter with God,[1] and also upon his continued earthly existence in the sacramental Church.

The Temple

In his compact little study, The Presence of God,[2] Jean Danielou has presented a concise theology of God's dwelling with man. Danielou traces the concept of the reality of God's presence through the history of its universal symbol, the temple. He develops the temple theme from its origin as the divine presence in the cosmos through the Old and New Testament notions of the Mosaic temple and the Christian Church to the idea of the "mystical temple" and of the "heavenly temple."

Such a recapitulation of the notion of God's dwelling with man forms a theological background for Teresa's Moradas. Not that the saint consciously studied such a background in order to arrive at her choice of symbol. Her choice, she tells us, was born of the simple need to give some tangible form to her doctrine of the divine indwelling.

A symbol, we have said, already possesses its meaning when it is seized by the human mind and employed to embody that meaning. Obviously, significations change and even become replaced by others. History modifies and transforms the signifying power of basic signs.[1] But the dwelling place has always possessed for man the symbolic meaning of "inhabitation by God," even when in some religions the "indwelling" is transferred to other objects besides the house or temple. Such objects, as the stone or the lamp, are still said to be the sign of divine presence, not in the sense that they are the incarnation of this presence, but that they somehow house the divinity and are transfigured by the divine presence and power dwelling within.[2]

---

[1] Cf., the profound work of Edward Schillebeeckx under this title, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, (New York, 1963).

[2] (Baltimore, 1959).

Again, the studies of Eliade, Danielou, and van der Leeuw, as well as a host of works on comparative religion, symbolism, psychology, and archeology[3] point to the fact that when man tries to grasp the mystery of the presence of God, both revelation and human psychology lead him to the symbols of dwelling, sacred enclosure, tabernacle. As Danielou has indicated,[4] these symbols run the gamut from the heavens as the "tent of God" and the tabernacle as the shekinah, to Christ and his Church as the living and eternal reality of

---

[1] Eliade, Patterns, p. 234.

[2] Ibid., pp. 233-235.

[3] Cf. Bibliography, especially: Congar, The Mystery of the Temple; Fromm, The Forgotten Language; Harned, Theology and Art; Ladner, The Idea of Reform; Lepp, The Depths of the Soul.

[4] God and the Ways of Knowing and The Presence of God.

God's dwelling with men. For the real temple of God is the Manhood of the Word as extended through time in the Church and in each member of the Mystical Body. And this temporal indwelling is the beginning of the eternal and perfect Presence of God to man.

Christian mystical experience concentrates on this threefold aspect of the true temple: Christ, the Church, and each soul in particular. The saints who experience the reality of the divine indwelling know the fulfillment of the promise of God which echoes through the ages. In the real symbols of localized or spatial presence, in house and temple, ancient man found the power of God's presence.[1] Later the exiled Israelites found it in God's word of promise; He himself would be their sanctuary in a strange place. He would be their God and they would be his people.[2] Finally, the realization of the dwelling symbol came in Christ the Word-Made-Flesh, who "pitched his tent" or "was tabernacled" among men,[3] and who promised his continued dwelling in the hearts of men through his Spirit in the Church.[4]

The Temple in Sacred Scripture

To pause to illustrate the above conclusions from the history of myth and the studies of comparative religion and of Sacred Scripture would be to traverse ground already well covered in the scholarly works of Congar, Danielou, Eliade, and Van der Leeuw to which we refer.[1] It is more to our purpose to build on the foundation laid by these studies and to illustrate from the writings of Saint Teresa their conclusions on the universality and all-inclusiveness of the temple as symbol for the salvation mystery.

---

[1] Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, pp. 395 ff.

[2] Ezek. 37, 26-8; Zach. 2, 14-17; 8, 8; Lev. 26, 11-12; Exod. 29, 45; Jer. 31, 33.

[3] Jn. 1, 14.

[4] Jn. 14, 37.

Saint Paul theologizes on the fulfillment of the mystery of the divine Presence and confirms the fact that the Church, the people of God, constitutes the consecrated temple of the Spirit:

> Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God.[2]
>
> Didn't you realize that you were God's temple and that the Spirit of God was living among you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy him, because

---

[1] Cf. notes 1, 3 and 4, p. 5 above; also note 1, p. 46 below, also Sister Lillian Turney, CDP. The Symbolism in St. Bonaventure's "Itinerarium mentis in Deum" (Fordham University, 1968), Chs. IV and VI. Sister Lillian's dissertation studies the symbol of the "center" which she recognizes as the "generic symbolic system of which the symbolism of the temple may, in a manner of speaking, be regarded as a species." (p. 82). We are indebted to Sister's research on archaic man's image of the world and on the temple symbolism in Sacred Scripture and in medieval art, for the basis upon which to build our thesis on the castle as a development of the temple image. The temple was seen by ancient man to be modeled upon man. So also medieval man saw the cathedral as an image of the mystic, personal dwelling place of His Majesty, the King.

[2] I Cor. 6, 19.

the temple of God is sacred; and you are that temple.[1]

But, as M. J. Congar[2] points out, it is in the Book of Revelation that the temple symbol synthesizes the major themes of both the Old and New Testaments. In the temple-palace imagery of the apocalyptic "new Jerusalem" there is the Old Testament promise of God to make his dwelling with men, the New Testament recognition of Christ as the temple, and the temporal and eschatological dimensions of the temple as the Church and as the individual Christian on earth and in glory.

For example, Revelation, Chapter twenty-one, verse 7, makes direct reference to the prophecy of Nathan,[3] that decisive moment in the development of the temple theme which is the source of the whole Davidic theme of the Messiah. Elsewhere, the Book of Revelation[4] echoes Psalm Eighty-eight and Isaias' prophecy of Christ the Victor, the "offspring of David's race."[5] The royal "offspring" seated on the throne of God shares his conquest with the people of

---

[1] I Cor. 3, 16-17; For a thorough treatment of the temple image in Sacred Scripture, cf. M. J. Congar, The Mystery of the Temple (Westminster, Md.) 1962.

[2] The Mystery of the Temple, pp. 217-219.

[3] 2 Sam. 7, 1-17.

[4] Rev. 1, 5; 5, 5; 11, 1.

[5] Is. 11.1, 10.

God who have conquered also in his name. The title, Son of God, indicates this royal dignity. David's lineage issues in an heir and in many heirs simultaneously. There is but one heir, but associated with him, rather included in him, are all the faithful. The temple of God is this unique Person, this Heir in his own right, Son and King whose inheritance extends to all mankind.

Thus Revelation summarizes the entire meaning of the temple as it is understood in the Gospels and in the teaching of the Apostles. The Gospels present the risen Christ as the temple.[1] The Epistles extend the symbol to the entire Church. In the First Epistle of Peter and in Ephesians the Church is the temple through Jesus Christ; the faithful are a "royal priesthood" only through sharing in the death, resurrection and glory of Christ. It is in union with and through the Pasch of the Lamb that was slain and is victorious, that the faithful are victorious.

The Book of Revelation also includes and fulfills the cosmic aspect of the temple symbol. Christ as the source of the new creation[2] is the King, the Lamb who sits upon the throne of God[3] and partakes of the glory of God's presence or dwelling among his people.

---

[1] Mt. 21, 12 f; Mk. 11, 15-17; Lk. 19, 45 f; Jn. 2, 18-22.

[2] Rev. 21, 1, 5; 22, 1-2.

[3] Rev. 22, 1; 3, 21.

The eschatological cosmic restoration is the effect "not only of the perfect Reign of God, but also of his perfect Presence."[1]

The Scriptural Symbol of the Temple and the INTERIOR CASTLE

On the first page of her mystical treatise Teresa links her castle symbol to the "many mansions" of Saint John's Gospel. With this reference to the words of Christ, the new temple who fulfills the symbolism of the Mosaic temple and who assures his disciples of temporal and eternal participation in the divine indwelling,[2] Teresa places her castle symbol in the spectrum of scriptural symbols of the divine indwelling:

> I began to think of the soul as if it were a castle. . . in which there are many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions. Now if we think carefully over this, sisters, the soul of the righteous man is nothing but a paradise, in which, as God tells us, He takes His delight.[3]

Teresa has the parallel of the temple symbol at least in her subconscious. For example, when she is describing the prayer of recollection in the Fourth Mansions, she says of the soul experiencing this stage of prayer: "There seems gradually to be built for him the structure in which he can make his prayer (el edificio para la oración).[1] Or again, in the Seventh Mansion, she writes: "So tranquilly and noiselessly does the Lord teach the soul in this state and do it good that I am reminded of the building of Solomon's temple. . . ."[2]

---

[1] Congar, loc. cit., pp. 217-219.

[2] Jn. 14, 23.

[3] I, i, 1: ". . . que es considerar nuestra alma como un castillo. . . adonde hay muchos aposentos, así como en el cielo hay muchas moradas. Que si bien consideramos, hermanas, no es otra cosa el alma del justo, sino un paraíso adonde dice El tiene sus deleites."

We have noted already Teresa's initial allusion to the soul as "heaven" since it is the abode of God. We shall observe this in detail later in Chapter VI,[3] where we shall also have something to say about the interplay of the apocalyptic theme: the soul in God and God in the soul. Thus, for example, in the description of the soul-castle in the Seventh Mansion, she writes, "Here the soul delights in the tabernacle of God."[4] Her direct reference is to the delineation of the divine indwelling as given in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation.

The Temple-Castle in Mystical Tradition

Teresa's castle symbol is heir to a long tradition of mystical writers who describe man as the tabernacle of God. We shall select but a few examples of the symbol's use in order to show not only that Teresa participates in a continuous literary tradition, but also that this literary tradition is itself rooted in the more universal structure of the symbolism of the center. We do not propose to trace with certainty the literary, no less the theological evolution of Teresa's castle, but only to sketch the outlines which prove the symbol's traditional human and Christian content.

---

[1] IV, iii, 1.

[2] VII, iii, 11: "Pasa con tanta quietud y tan sin ruido todo lo que el Señor aprovecha aquí a el alma y la enseña, que me parece es como la edificación del templo de Solomón. . ."

[3] Cf. pp. 189-193, below.

[4] VII, iii, 13.

In Christian mysticism, the "dwelling," "temple" or "heaven" images for the human soul have their origin in the image theology which is a characteristic theme in both the Eastern and Western Fathers. Christian theology begins with the image, with the fact that God created man in His own image and ordained the re-creation of that image in His Spirit through the Incarnate Word. Human existence has its beginning and its end in the Image. The perfection of the human image resides in contemplation of the divine Image; that is, in becoming more perfectly human through contemplative union with God. This is man's temporal and eternal fulfillment.

> And we, with our unveiled faces reflecting like mirrors the brightness of the Lord, all grow brighter and brighter as we are turned into the image that we reflect; this is the work of the Lord who is Spirit.[1]

---

[1] 2 Cor. 3, 18.

Origen

Origen followed the Pauline teaching in making his image-theology Christo-centric. According to Origen,[1] the Word is the absolute image of God. Man is the image of the Image. Man is to be re-made in the image of the Image of God. Thus the Word-Made-Flesh is at once the expression, the instrument and the fulfillment of the God-man relationship. In the divine economy this relationship has a concrete reality. It is individualized in each human soul by means of the divine indwelling.

"I know that my soul is a dwelling place," wrote Origen. "It is inhabited by God, his Christ, and his Holy Spirit."[2] And again: "You are heaven and you are destined for heaven."[3] Here the master of early Christian mysticism strikes the keynote of image-theology: the image is "already but not yet" restored. Christ has restructured mankind's likeness to God, but the likeness is yet to be restructured in each man who freely wills his own union with God. The soul of man united to God is "heaven" even while heaven is yet to come in the perfection of eternal union with God. In those whose "conversation is in heaven" God rests and resides even now. They have become the "heaven" which "shows forth the glory of God."[1]

---

[1] Cf. In. Joan., 1 ; also Cels. 6, 63, CGS p. 133 ff. and Hom. In Gen, CGS, p. 15.

Origen, in company with several of the Fathers, e.g., Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria, makes a distinction between the "image" and "likeness" of Genesis 1, 26: The "image" is the earthly, that which remained in man even after the fall; the "likeness" is that which was lost and is to be restored.

[2] In Jerem., Hom. VIII.

[3] Ibid.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, too, takes up and adapts the mystical symbolism of the temple. In The Life of Moses he explains the description of the heavenly tabernacle as relating to Christ, to the Church and to the individual Christian:

> Taking a small clue from Paul, who has partially revealed the mystery involved here, we shall say that by this symbol Moses was instructed in anticipation of that Tabernacle which embraces the universe: and this is Christ, the Power and the Wisdom of God, Who being in His own nature not made by human hand, received a created existence when He was to build his tabernacle among us. . . .[2]
>
> Seeing that Paul in many places identifies the Church with Christ, we may well understand the servants of the divine mystery, which the Work calls the pillars of the Church (Gal. 2, 9), as the Apostles, the teachers and the prophets. For it is not only Peter, John and James who are pillars of the Church, and not only is John the Baptist a burning light (John 6, 35), but all those are rightly called pillars and lights who support upon themselves the burden of the Church and have become lamps by their labors. . . .[3]

---

[1] Cf. Phil. 3, 20; Moradas, I, i, 1. and V, i, 2: "To some extent it is possible for us to enjoy Heaven upon earth."

[2] "The Life of Moses" (377C-385A ed. Danielou, ii, 167-183) trans. Herbert Musurillo, S. J., in From Glory to Glory (New York, 1961) p. 132.

[3] Ibid. (385A-388A ed. Danielou, ii, 184-188) pp. 135-136.

Like Origen, Gregory bases his interpretation of the symbol of the tabernacle on image-theology. Our restoration to the divine likeness which was bestowed upon us at creation, he says, is both a gratuitous gift of God and the result of personal human effort to clear away the debris of sin and let the hidden beauty of the soul come to light, through the "discovery" of the divine indwelling:

> This lesson is taught, I think, in the Gospel, where our Lord speaks to those who have ears for the mysteries that wisdom teaches us: "the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17, 21). I think that the text here points out that the gift of God is not separated from our nature nor is it far from those who choose to look for it. It dwells within everyone of us, ignored and forgotten," choked with the cares and pleasures of life" (Lk. 8, 14), but is rediscovered when we turn our minds to it.[1]

Continuing with the parabolic figures, Saint Gregory explains that the drachma lost in the home, which is the soul, is "the image of our King, which has not yet been completely lost, but is simply hidden under dirt."[2] Here we find elements of symbolism which were to become common in the Christian mystical tradition: "The soul's associates are, of course, the various faculties of the soul which the text here calls neighbors."[3] Elsewhere, Gregory speaks of "the citadel of the soul" being attacked by "the underlings. . . or hostile drives within us."[1] And as we shall see below, Saint Gregory's Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles forms the perfect prototype for Saint Teresa's moradas of the divine indwelling:

---

[1] On Virginity (46. 369B-376B); Ibid., p. 114.

[2] Ibid., p. 115.

[3] Ibid.

> This is why she (the Bride of the Canticles) says: "When I had a little passed by them," I abandoned all creatures and passed by all that is intelligible in creation; and when I gave up every finite mode of comprehension, then it was that I found my Beloved by faith. And "I will never let Him go," now that I have found Him, from the grasp of faith, until He comes within my "chamber." For the heart is indeed a "chamber" to be filled by the divine indwelling--that is, when it is restored to the state that it had in the beginning.[2]

Saint Augustine

The triune God is man's dwelling place, wrote Saint Augustine in his Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John, and man is the dwelling place of God because he is the temple of God.[3] When his whole inner self is filled with this majestic presence, the individual can return to his home, and to his own inner self to be active in loving and adoring "as man's first activity when he has such guests within his home. And the rest will follow without life or love ever being absent themselves from his dwelling."[4]

---

[1] On the Beatitudes, sermon 3, (PG 44.1225C-1229A); trans. J. Danielou, From Glory to Glory, p. 89.

[2] Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles (PG 44. 893C), Danielou, p. 31.

[3] In. Evan Joan, tract 76 (PL 1928).

[4] Ibid., tract 76, (PL 1831).

This is the doctrine which Augustine recognized as permeating the Gospel of Saint John and upon which he based the moving colloquies of his Confessions:

> Who will grant unto me to find repose in Thee? Who will grant unto me that Thou wilt come into my heart and inebriate it, so that I may forget my evils and embrace my one Good, Thee? . . .
>
> Narrow is the household of my soul, for Thou to come into it: Let it be enlarged by Thee. It lies in ruins: do Thou rebuild it.[1]

The Patristic Temple Symbol and the INTERIOR CASTLE

As we shall see in the case of the symbol of the spouse, Saint Teresa's castle symbol for the divine indwelling has its roots in the exegetical treatises of the Fathers as well as its counterparts in the writings of the medieval mystics. It is no exaggeration to see in Teresa's symbol traces of the "temple" or "dwelling" symbolism of an Origen or Gregory of Nyssa, a Ruysbroeck, or Ramón Lull. It is important also to realize that before the Grand Inquisition of Valdes[2] Teresa had access to Latin translations of the masters of Christian spirituality, and to the Spanish writings of her contemporaries[3] who were familiar with the classics.

---

[1] Confessions, Bk. 1, Ch. 5.

[2] in 1559; cf. Vida, XXVI.

[3] I, i, 1; cf. p.16, above.

We have ~~seen~~ already that Origen's concept of the soul as "heaven" is thematic in Teresa's Interior Castle. In her first chapter, after alluding to Saint John's "many mansions" in explanation of her symbol, she says: "The soul of the righteous man is nothing but a paradise in which, as God tells us, He takes His delight."[1] Speaking of the individual's role in preparation for mystical union, she writes: "To some extent it is possible for us to enjoy Heaven upon earth. . . ."[2] And again, in describing the heights attained in the mystical union, she exclaims: "Let us call this a second Heaven."[3]

Although it is fairly certain that Teresa's acquaintance with the Eastern Fathers was only through secondary sources, it is also certain that she herself had read Saint Augustine, at least his Confessions.[4] In Augustine, Teresa must have sensed a deep consciousness of the personal inhabitation of the Trinity in the temple of the human soul.[5] The doctrine of the divine indwelling, while not explicitly the subject matter of the Confessions, underlies every prayerful outpouring of that work, as, for example, in the frequently quoted passage:

> Late have I loved Thee, O Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved Thee! And behold, Thou were within

---

[1] I, i, 1; cf. p.4 and 49, above.

[2] V, i, 2.

[3] VIII, i, 3.

[4] Vida, IX, 8.

[5] Cf. Saint Augustine, Ep. 187, (PL 33, 832-45).

XUM

> and I was without. I was looking for Thee out there, and I threw myself, deformed as I was, upon those well-formed things which Thou hast made. Thou wert with me, yet I was not with Thee.[1]

With Teresa this is a favorite Augustinian concept. She refers to it directly in her Life and in the Interior Castle.[2]

In Augustine, we note the same interplay of the images of God's dwelling in the soul and the soul's dwelling in God which is characteristic of all mystical expression of the divine indwelling. Teresa's symbols, as we shall point out later,[3] parallel this reciprocal expression suggesting its progressive stages in the development of the mystical life, but heightening its essential ambiguity at the moment when the mystic has arrived at the summit of divine union.

The Symbol in Medieval Mysticism

Saint Bernard

Saint Bernard of Clairvaux speaks also in reciprocal phrases of the soul's hope "to apprehend the fourth degree of love, or rather, to be apprehended in it."[4] Bernard refers also to the "many mansions" of Saint John which inspired Saint Teresa's symbol:

---

[1] Confessions, Bk. X, Ch. 27.

[2] Vida, XL, 6; Moradas, IV, iii, 3; VI, vii, 9.

[3] Chapter VI, below.

[4] Terence Connolly, SJ, ed. and trans., Saint Bernard on the Love of God. (Westminster, Md., 1951), p. 48.

> Thus, therefore, where the Bridegroom dwells there are many mansions. . . . But there is a place where the Lord is perceived truly at peace and tranquil. It is in fact the place not of a judge, not of a teacher, but of a Bridegroom. And it is to me certainly (for I know nothing concerning others) a real bedchamber if from time to time it is my privilege to be admitted to it. . . . Let the bedchamber be the secret of interior contemplation.[1]

Here Bernard (and Teresa after him) hesitates to generalize mystical experience. The symbol is universal; the experience, individual. Each Christian is a unique "other Christ" because every experience of union with Christ takes place in the center of the soul by way of "the secret of interior contemplation," every experience of the indwelling Christ is in a unique personality.

The writings of Saint Teresa give evidence of her acquaintance with the works of Saint Bernard[2] and her symbols indicate a common spirit with him. This is particularly true of the development of the spouse symbol from Canticles; hence we shall reserve for the following chapter a more extensive treatment of Teresa's heritage from Saint Bernard.

Saint Bonaventure

The scriptural and traditional temple image has a classical expression in the West in Saint Bonaventure's Itinerarium mentis in Deum.[1] As a secondary image in the Itinerarium, the symbol of the temple describes the steps by which the soul rises through contemplation of created things to union with God.[2] In the systematic medieval philosophy of Bonaventure the symbol receives minute analysis and detailed structure. The tabernacle or temple is the mind of man. Each of the appurtenances--developed, as by the Eastern Fathers from the scriptural descriptions of Solomon's temple--has its appointed parallel in man's spiritual activity. The tabernacle is divided into two chambers: the first, or anterior chamber, is separated by a veil from the second, which is the Holy of Holies. Against the veil is placed a candelabra, and behind it, within the Holy of Holies, resides the ark of the Covenant, above which are the Cherubim who face the Mercy Seat.

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 124-25.

[2] Cf. Vida, XXII, 7 and Avisos, 38.

The anterior chamber signifies the human mind and the candelabra its divine illumination. The Holy of Holies symbolizes the presence of God in the depths of the soul, and the two cherubim stand for the two basic aspects of contemplating God, that is, as Being and as Trinity. The Mercy Seat is Christ.

---

[1] Cf. Sister Lillian M. Turney, CDP. op. cit.

[2] Saint Bonaventure, Itinerarium mentis in Deum, 5, 1, Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae Opera omnia, ed. studio et cura PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura. (Quaracchi, 1882-1902), V 308 ab.

Exquisitely patterned, Bonaventure's imagery lacks the spontaneity so characteristic of Teresa. Yet that both are heirs to the same mystical tradition is evident in their use of the temple-castle symbol. The experience of contemplation is for both the experience of an interior illumination, whose source is the presence of the divine Guest and Master. The Seraphic Doctor and the Mother of Carmel shared very little in background, education, and genius, yet they shared a common religious tradition. Personal contact with God and experience of transforming union with him transcend time, environment, and circumstances to issue in the basic expressions of mystical imagery: the soul as the dwelling place of God who perfects it as his spouse.

> Our mind, filled with all these intellectual illuminations, is inhabited by the divine wisdom as house of God; becomes the daughter, the spouse, and the friend of God; made a member of Christ the head, the sister, and the fellow-heir; made nontheless the temple of the Holy Spirit.[1]

Ruysbroeck and Lull

The scope of this study does not permit a detailed examination of the medieval writers who followed Bonaventure's lead in the metaphysical structuring of "the mind's journey to God." Nor does it seem profitable to retrace the speculations of Teresian scholars on the possibility of Saint Teresa's literary dependence upon the mystical tradition of the thirteenth century as perfected by Jan van Ruysbroeck and Ramón Lull. There is no evidence to contradict the supposition that the tradition of Ruysbroeck and Lull reached Teresa only through her contact with contemporary spiritual literature.[1]

---

[1] Ibid., Ch. 4, #8; Cf. also #5. Eng. trans. by G. Boaz in The Mind's Road to God (Indianapolis, 1953). p. 32.

The very titles of Ruysbroeck's major works, the Spiritual Espousals, the Book of the Castles, the Sparkling Stone, the Book of the Spiritual Tabernacle, bespeak Teresa's affinity with this symbolism. At the beginning of the last-mentioned work there is a beautiful summary of Ruysbroeck's concept of the mystical temple:

> Christ, the Son of God, has built for God, for Himself, and for us, an eternal Ark and Tabernacle; and it is none other than He Himself or the Church and every man of good will whose Prince and Head He is . . . . When a man seeks to obey God with an undivided heart, he is freed and discharged from every sin, by the blood of our Lord. He is bound and united to God, and God with him. And he becomes himself the Ark and Tabernacle where God wishes to dwell, not in a figure but in reality. For the figure is past and the reality is revealed to those who wish to turn towards it.[2]

There is little doubt but that the concepts in Ramón Lull's "science of love" color to some extent the mystical writings of Spain's Golden Age. Yet of the prolific Majorcan who wrote in Catalan and in Latin, Allison Peers finds no direct literary influence upon Castilian letters.[1] Can it be that the influence was of a more subtle, psychological type? Hatzfeld finds such a subtle influence touching Saint Teresa through the writing of Francisco de Osuna.[2]

---

[1] Cf. Helmut Hatzfeld, Estudios literarios sobre la mística española, p. 46; Juan Saiz Barbera, Filosofía del amor en Lulio, p. 11; E. Allison Peers, Studies of the Spanish Mystics, Vol. I. pp. 3-5; Carmen Conde, "Sobre las escritura de Santa Teresa y su amor a los libros," Revista de Espiritualidad, XXII, Nos. 87-89 (1963) pp. 351-353.

[2] Jan van Ruysbroeck, Le Tabernacle spiritual, (Paris, 1920) p. 27.

The Symbol in Contemporary Sources

Francisco de Osuna

Without prescinding from the psychological reality of the collective unconscious and its special influence on mystical symbolism, we can trace the common heritage of medieval mysticism as it reached Saint Teresa directly in Spanish spiritual literature. Foremost among her literary influences is Fray Francisco de Osuna.[3] Teresa was but beginning her religious life and had not yet learned the science of prayer, she tells us,[1] when a pious uncle gave her a copy of Osuna's Third Spiritual Alphabet. The Carmel at Avila still possesses this book, its most worthwhile passages underscored or margin-marked by Teresa's pen.

---

[1] Peers, Spanish Mysticism, A Preliminary Survey (London, 1924), p. 47.

[2] Hatzfeld, op. cit., p. 46: "Thus, the geneological tree of the science of love has its main branches in Lull, Osuna, Teresa, and John of the Cross. Lull is the transmittor of the concepts of the 'science of pure love' through Osuna to Saint Teresa. . ."; cf. also, Carmen Conde, op. cit., p. 351: "The fount of inspiration for Osuna's concept of the 'science of love' which was transmitted to Saint Teresa and then to Saint John of the Cross, must have been Ramon Lull's 'Art of Love.'"

[3] Cf. P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, Obras Completas, Vol. I, p. xxxv; E. Allison Peers, Preliminary Survey, p. 13; G. Etchegoyen, L'amour divin. Essai sur les sources de Sainte Thérèse, p. xxviii.

Thanks to the research of Franciscan scholarship this primary source of Teresian symbolism is accessible to the general reader.[2] That the Third Spiritual Alphabet influenced Teresa's mystical life is a fact especially evident from the point of view of symbolism.[3] The Third Alphabet's Fourth Treatise, Chapter II, entitled, "That the Heart Must Be Guarded Like a Castle," is well marked with Teresa's favorite marginal signs: a little cross, a heart, a pointing hand. Perhaps here we have the origin of her castle image, although the saint seems unconscious of its direct origin at the moment of her inspiration to develop the image in Las Moradas. As a matter of fact, she had used the castle symbol earlier in the Way of Perfection:

---

[1] Vida. IV, 7. It is significant that in this passage Saint Teresa uses Osuna's generic term for the mystical life, recogimiento (recollection), a term which Osuna uses in various senses, but most often to indicate the entire life of the prayer of union.

[2] P. Michel-Ange, Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles (Madrid, 1911) Vol. XVI, pp. 319-587; Father Cuthbert, OSFC, The Third Spiritual Alphabet (Westminster, Md., 1948), cf. Introduction and notes.

[3] Not that the Franciscan Friar lays any claim to originality in his choice of images. Most of them are culled from Sacred Scripture and from the Fathers, of whom he seems to have had ample knowledge.

> And now let us imagine that we have within us a palace of priceless worth, built entirely of gold and precious stones--a palace in short, fit for so great a Lord. Imagine that it is partly your doing that this palace should be what it is--and this is really true, for there is no building so beautiful as a soul that is pure and full of virtues, and the greater these virtues are, the more brilliantly do the stones shine. Imagine that within the palace dwells this great King. . .[1]

The figure of jewels or precious stones as the virtues adorning the castle of the heart comes from Osuna as well as the concept of the "call of the King" within. Hidden in Teresa's subconscious, too, (at least at the time of the writing of the Interior Castle) must have been Osuna's idea of "the divine light infusing itself into the soul as into pure glass or crystal."[2] Often when Saint Teresa prefaces a particularly telling image with "I think I read or heard somewhere. . . " her source, at least one source, has been Francisco de Osuna; for example: the symbol of the silkworm,[3] of the fire or spark,[4] of water,[5] and of the tortoise.[6]

The Third Spiritual Alphabet also must have been one of the secondary sources for much of Teresa's knowledge of Augustine, Bernard, and Bonaventure, each of whom Osuna quotes frequently. Fray Francisco de Osuna was source _par excellence_ for Teresa in the sense that his work was a theoretical and practical basis for the mysticism which she was to explicate. In Osuna's work also we find a precedent for Teresa's homely language and simple examples drawn from personal experience.

---

[1] Camino, 28.

[2] Third Alphabet, Sixth Treatise, Ch. IV; cf. Moradas, I, iii, 3 and VI, viii, 4.

[3] V ii, 6; Osuna, Sixteenth Treatise, Ch. VI.

[4] VI, ii, 6-8; Osuna, Twenty-first Treatise, Ch. VII.

[5] IV, ii; Osuna, Sixth Treatise, Ch. IV.

[6] IV, ii, 3; Osuna, Ibid.; (For further discussion of these images, cf. Chapter V, below.)

Osuna conceived of the mystical life as a whole and made little or no attempt to clarify its progressive steps or analyze its stages. "Recollection (_recogimiento_) is to him _one_ state, _one_ exercise, with variations of greater or less importance," writes Professor Peers:

> Within that state the condition of the soul changes little, and may be described in general terms. Certain rules for profitable recollection may be laid down: . . . They are applicable, with but few modifications, to beginners and proficients alike. And if this method is less scientific than another, it is certainly more in accordance with the experiences of any but the most advanced of mystics.[1]

As one of the most advanced, Teresa took up the mystic way almost at the point where Fray Francisco left it. His doctrine constituted the firm basis upon which she could construct the intricate patterns of spiritual progress. His "fortress-castle" was the model of the lofty castle which she was to erect and which would predominate on the mystical horizon of future ages. His image of the soul, "small citadel of God made joyful by the impulse of grace,"[1] became with Teresa the spacious castle, ample, beautiful, and resplendent with the presence of God.[2]

---

[1] Peers, _Studies_, Vol. I, p.57

Bernardino de Laredo

Saint Teresa's mystical spirit also outstripped another of her predecessors, Barnardino de Laredo. Again we have her own acknowledgment of her indebtedness to this Franciscan lay brother. Although Teresa does not mention him by name, the book to which she refers in her Life[3] as "The Ascent of the Mount" is Bernardino de Laredo's The Ascent of Mount Sion, published at Seville in 1535.[4] She tells us that the reading of this book marked a turning point in her spiritual life since it was a means of identifying her state of prayer, and indirectly a means of obtaining her first sound spiritual director, Padre Juan de Pradanos, S. J.[5]

Saint Teresa describes at length the thoroughly human relief with which she came upon the text which articulated for her the first disturbing experiences of the prayer of quiet:

---

[1] Fourth Treatise, Ch. V.

[2] I, ii, 1 and 8.

[3] Vida, XXIII.

[4] Cf. Peers, Introduction to The Ascent of Mount Sion by Bernardino de Laredo (New York, 1952) pp. 48-53.

[5] Vida, XXIII.

> If after almost twenty years' experience of prayer I had gained nothing, but had been deluded by the devil, surely it was better for me not to pray at all--though this would also have been very difficult, for I had already discovered what my soul was like without prayer. Whichever way I looked, then, I was beset by trials. I was like a person who had fallen into a river: whatever direction he takes, he is afraid the danger will be greater and yet he is almost drowning. . . . Looking through my books to see if I could learn how to describe my method of prayer, I found in one, called The Ascent of the Mount, which describes the union of the soul with God, all the symptoms I had when I was unable to think of anything. It was exactly this that I was saying--that when I was experiencing that type of prayer, I could think of nothing.[1]

Teresa's consolation came, no doubt, from that phrase "to think of nothing," which occurs so often in de Laredo's work. She found also in his writing many of the images familiar to her from Osuna. It is difficult to determine the originator, if any, of the symbols used by the Spanish mystics. Professor Peers speaks of "the community of thought and language" among the medieval mystics, which makes it impossible to come to any conclusion as to originality in the case of any given symbol.[2] It is interesting to note, however, that Osuna's "little spark of the knowledge of God" becomes for de Laredo "the little spark of love." And it is the latter symbol which

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Peers, loc. cit., p. 47.

Teresa adopts in presenting the effects of the presence of God in the soul.[1] Père de Ros[2] traces much of Saint Teresa's vocabulary to de Laredo. The very term "mystical theology" which she hesitantly employs in the book of her Life[3] was de Laredo's term for the experience of mystical prayer.[4]

In Chapters twenty-nine and thirty-four of the Ascent, de Laredo speaks of the temple of the human soul, likening his figure to the temple of David or of Solomon. "Certainly this work is admirable, since the mansion (morada) is being prepared for God alone . . . "

> When the holy David says here with deepest humility, that in this work the mansion is being prepared for God and not for man, this should not fail to awaken in men the humility necessary to prepare the living temple of God--which temple is our soul. . .[5]

Saint Peter of Alcántara

A saint among Teresa's contemporaries, Peter of Alcántara, had a marked influence with regard to her spiritual and apostolic life.

---

[1] VI, ii, 4.

[2] Fidèle de Ros, Un Inspirateur de Sainte Thérèse: Le Frère Bernardin de Laredo. (Paris, 1948).

[3] Chapters X-XII.

[4] Ascent, Chapter 11.

[5] Ibid., Chapter 34. cf. Teresa's reference to God's action in the soul as "the building of Solomon's temple," p.49 , above.

Besides counselling her in matters of prayer, he took an active interest in the initial foundation of the Reform, and, as we have seen, was instrumental in obtaining the Bishop of Avila's sanction for it.[1]

Saint Teresa always held Fray Pedro in highest esteem. She attests to his sanctity[2] and recommends to her spiritual daughters his Treatise on Prayer and Meditation.[3] In the book of her Life she describes Saint Peter as a kindred spirit, one who shared the same spiritual and apostolic experiences and aspirations:

> Almost from the beginning, I saw that, out of his own experience, he understood me. . . . He derived great happiness from what I said to him, was helpful and kind to me in every way and ever afterwards took a great interest in me and told me about his own affairs and undertakings. When he saw that I had desires which he himself had already carried into effect--for the Lord had bestowed very resolute desires upon me--and when he found, too, that I was so full of courage, he delighted in talking to me about these things. For if the Lord brings anyone to this state he will find no pleasure or comfort equal to that of meeting with another whom he believes He has brought along the first part of the same road. . . .[4]

When Teresa speaks of the joy and satisfaction she derived from finding that "he says exactly what I say, although not in the self same words," she is referring to Peter's treatise on contemplation wherein he comes to her own conclusion on the divine initiative in contemplative union. Of interest to our study is the fact that in the Eighth Counsel Peter's imagery closely resembles Teresa's use of "flint and spark" and a "gardener's watering a patch of ground from the flow of a spring." Of special note is this description of contemplative prayer:

---

[1] Vida, XXXVI, i.

[2] VI, ii, 11.

[3] Constituciones, I, 13.

[4] Vida, XXX, 4-5.

> Let a man imprison himself within his own self, in the center of his soul, wherein is the image of God, and there let him wait upon Him, as one listens to another speaking from some high tower, or as though he had Him within his heart. . . .[1]

With the name of Peter of Alcántara the short list of Teresa's known literary sources[2] comes to an end. Traces of both secondary and primary influences on her symbolism are unmistakable. Yet the interplay of mystical inspiration and intellectual curiosity, of conscious imitation and unconscious adaptation constitutes a subtle force of integration for the symbolism of Las Moradas. Teresa did not write on a blank page. Spiritual, literary, and psychological experience traced a pattern for her symbols.

Psychological Basis for the Castle Symbol

When analyzing Saint Teresa's castle symbol we cannot overlook the psychological dimension, since we are concerned with the intuitive grasp of reality which symbolism grants to mind and heart. The eminent Spanish critic, Menéndez y Pelayo, commenting on Saint Teresa's doctrine of self-knowledge and union with God, observes that all Spanish thinking of the sixteenth century is marked with the seal of the psychological; that is, it is characterized by an emphasis on interior knowledge and an energetic affirmation of human personality.[1] This concern for "the interior" broadens immediately, through symbolism, to an intuitive and intimate grasp of the whole of reality.

---

[1] Treatise on Prayer and Meditation, Eighth Counsel; cf. "The Minor Teresian Symbols," Ch. V, below.

[2] The name of Luis de Granada has been omitted. Although he remains one of Teresa's notable precursors, one with whom she shared a love of nature and its symbols, he does not figure as a source for the castle image.

Saint Teresa herself assures us that the foundation of her Moradas is interior observation.[2] In fact, she makes an important issue of self-knowledge and of the force of the human personality in the divine-human relationship.[3] It is upon the premise of personal psychological differences that she rests her doctrine of unlimited variety and freedom in the "ways" of mystical union.[4] The "many mansions" symbolize this variety, while the unstructured grouping of unnumbered chambers "above and below and around"[5] symbolize the freedom of the soul in its own domain even while "His Majesty" is in possession of the innermost region of the soul castle.

---

[1] Thomas Walsh, trans. "Menéndez y Pelayo on Spanish Mystical Poetry," Thought, 6 (1941) pp. 113-114.

[2] I, ii, 12.

[3] II, 2.

[4] III, ii, 14.

[5] I, i, 3 and ii, 8.

The fact that Teresa's castle, despite the seeming complexity of its many mansions, is constructed of a single diamond or of a single piece of lucid crystal is most significant. This detail places her symbol in the psychological context of the history of temple and stone symbolism. The single stone has always been a sign. Its hardness, roughness, and permanence point to power beyond itself.[1] To say that primitive man "adored" stones is not to say that he personified them as sacred in themselves. The fundamental notion of symbolism is apparent in the fact that the stone's sacred value has been due to something beyond its own reality. Man has given this sacred value to the stone because of what it represents: something other than and more than itself.[2] It is a natural symbol for power beyond human power, for strength, fidelity, immortality--a point of contact for God and man.[3] The stone is sacred because it is a "place" where God "dwells," manifests himself, or communicates with man.

The Collective Unconscious

Underlying Teresa's description of the single, translucent stone rests the human inheritance of stone symbolism. Carl Jung sees symbols as emerging from what he terms "the collective unconscious." Just as the works of Eliade and van der Leeuw throw light on the meaning of the temple and soul castle, so also the studies of Jung, who interprets the precious stone as a symbol of the self, offer rich resources to clarify aspects of Teresa's symbolism.

---

[1] Cf. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, Vol. I, pp. 52-55.

[2] Eliade, Patterns . . . , p. 216.

[3] Cf. Deut., 32, 4: He is the Rock, his work is perfect,
For all his ways are equity.
A God faithful, without unfairness,
Uprightness itself and justice.

In using Jung's thought we do not intend to be held responsible for the validity of his premises or to hold ourselves responsible for the validity of using modern psychology to interpret a sixteenth century mystic. On the basis of our assumption in the Introduction[1] that there is some resonance between a mystic's use of a symbol and the meaning of the symbol for those who do not share mystical consciousness, we have used Jung's theory ~~as~~ hypothetically valid, in order to see what clarification might result.

Let us begin, then, with an explanation of the nature of the collective unconscious. According to Jung,[2] the collective unconscious is the meeting place and potpourri of all the "sign" value of symbols as well as the ground for the "individuation process" which integrates human personality. While Freud asserts that the content of the human unconscious consists of forgotten and repressed personal experience, Jung maintains that this personal unconscious comprises only a somewhat unimportant portion of the total. Rather is it the collective unconscious that is the prime mover in man. This collective unconscious, should be perceived as more than the ancestral unconscious, since it is made up of the residue of affinities and aversions, virtues and vices, hopes and fears of all who have gone before us. Jung seems to focus upon the common elements of the collective unconscious to the extent that its ancestry can be equated with the entire human race. He sees common elements of the unconscious criss-crossing all the cultures of the world and coming to light across the ages in archetypal symbols.[1]

---

[1] Cf. p 7 , above.

[2] C. G. Jung, Collected Works. Vol. 9: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. (New York, 1959), Part I, p. 167.

Carl Jung's "collective unconscious" is not, however, the mere composite of the experience of one's ancestors. Rather it is what Josef Goldbrunner terms the "precipitates of the experience" of all humanity.[2] The collective unconscious is made up of "the qualities which have been imprinted on [man's] spiritual inheritance."[3] Jung himself describes his term:

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 101 ff. and 160 ff.; cf. Yolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New Haven, 1962), p. 29, n. 1.

[2] Josef Goldbrunner. *Individuation: A Study of the Depth Psychology of C.G. Jung*. (New York, 1956) p. 105.

[3] *Ibid*.

> It is sufficient to know that there is not a single important idea or view that does not possess historical antecedents. They are all founded upon archetypal, primordial forms, whose sensuous nature dates from a time when consciousness did not yet think, but merely perceived. Thought was an object of inner perception, not intellection only, but sensed as a manifestation--seen or heard, so to speak. Thought was essentially revelation, not something invented, but something forced upon us or bringing conviction through its immediate actuality.[1]

In reply to the critics of the "inheritance" theory Jung has said:

> Of course this term 'the collective unconscious' is not meant to denote an inherited idea but rather an inherited mode of psychic functioning. . . . It is a pattern of behaviour.[2]

When the archetypal foundation of thought clothes itself in an adequate symbol there exists what Jung at first called the "primordial image," or "dominant of the collective unconscious;" that is, the archetypal symbol. He is careful to explain that the recurrence in all cultures of the same motifs or symbols is not to be equated with "mere poetic conceit on the part of the conscious mind," but rather with a "spontaneous production of the objective psyche."[3] Not to be discounted, however, are the normal processes of the birth and growth of ideas. The forms and manifestations of symbols which are rooted in the uni-

---

[1] *Symbols of Transformation,* (Collected Works, Vol. 5, 1956) p. 215; cf. Jacobi, op. cit., pp. 39-40 for a comparison with Saint Augustine's *ideae principales*.

[2] From the introduction to M. Esther Harding, *Women's Mysteries*, pp. ix-x, as quoted by Jolande Jacobi, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[3] *Psychology and Alchemy* (Collected Works, Vol. 12, 1953) p. 209.

XUM

versal history of mankind vary with the individual and his cultural background. The symbol has an individual as well as a collective value, a subjective as well as an objective value. That is why it is also true to say that, to a certain extent, a person assimilates the collective unconscious through his environment and his participation in the institutional life of his culture.

The archetypal symbol is pre-existent and immanent in the individual psyche. When through the psychic stimulation it rises to consciousness, it takes form from the various "inborn" and assimilated reflections of the individual consciousness. And so the resulting symbol is the product of both universal and individual human experience. As such it has both universal and personal or subjective significance. Jolande Jacobi has cited a pertinent analogy from J. Killian's Der Kristall: "The crystalline lattice determines what forms are possible; the environment decides which of these possibilities will be realized."[1]

When Teresa describes the human personality as "a castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal,"[2] a number of forces come into play in the formation of her image. First of all, the archetypal symbol of the stone reveals a natural bond with the collective unconscious. As a religious symbol the stone stands for reality, indestructibility and lastingness.[1] It is, as we have seen, a symbol of spiritual power, the embodiment of divine power. Secondly, the fact that the stone is, for Teresa, a diamond, reveals a further link with archetypal symbolism. The precious stone is a universal symbol for the self.[2] The crystal, too, "a symbol of wholeness, points to the highest goal of psychic development, the 'self' . . ."[3]

---

[1] Jacobi, op. cit., p. 43.

[2] Moradas I, i, 1,

Other particulars of Teresa's castle symbolism may be cited as illustrative of the persistence of the archetypal symbol. The room (_morada_), for example, carries the general symbolic notion of individuality, place of private or "innermost" being.[4] The symbolism of the number of the _moradas_ is well-known. Seven is symbolic of perfect order, of a completed existence or cycle, or of an indefinable perfection.[5] In its cosmic significance, the number corresponds to the seven directions of space, that is, to the six essential directions: north, south, east, west, up, down, and the seventh dimension of the center. The number also indicates the seven planets or seven heavens and was thus interpreted in ancient temple architecture.[1] Once again, we are reminded of humankind's habit of seeing the cosmic and/or architectural structure as the image of man.[2]

---

[1] Cf. Eliade, _Patterns_ . . . , p. 271.

[2] Jung, _Psychology and Alchemy_ (Collected Works, Vol. 12) pp. 186 and 218.

[3] Jacobi, _op. cit._, note on Plate 5.

[4] Cf. C. Jung, _Psychology and Alchemy_ (C. W., Vol. 12) p. 142.

[5] _Ibid._, p. 63.

Christian tradition speaks of seven stages of spiritual transformation,[3] the number being derived from the four points of the cross (representing finite reality) and the sacred three of the Trinity (representing infinite reality).[4] Psychology sees a quarternity of the self or center of personal being[5]--as in the mandala, one of the oldest of religious symbols. Jung suggests that the paradox of the "three" which also appears in some mandala figures may be interpreted as added to the quarternity (in the process of transformation or self-realization) and representing the three regimina by which the four elements are converted into one another or synthesized in the quintessence.[6] Thus the number "seven" can signify, on the one hand, wholeness, unity, or the highest stage of illumination[7] and on the other hand, limitless possibility for perfection or fulfillment.[1]

---

[1] W. R. Lethaby, Architecture, Nature and Myth. pp. 43-44.

[2] Cf. p. 45 , notel , above.

[3] Jung, loc. cit., p. 76.

[4] Jung, loc. cit., p. 76; cf. Jacobi, loc. cit., pp. 46-47, n.

[5] Jung, Ibid., p. 220.

[6] Ibid., p. 205.

[7] Ibid., pp. 63 and 214.

The Personal Unconscious

From the point of view of subjective symbolism, Teresa's Spanish literary heritage contributed to the castle image. In the ancient Spanish epic of Rodrigo el último Godo the house of Hercules was said to be "toda de una piedra."[2] The tales of chivalry often repeated this classic image in their descriptions in order to add to the enchantment of their remote or beseiged castles.[3] Teresa's youthful predilection for los libros de caballerías is well known.[4] In these romantic novels the hero knights moved in symbolic settings not unlike those described by the mystic in her Interior Castle. Thus Teresa's choice of symbol can be traced beyond its spiritual and traditional inspiration to the personal unconscious developed by Spanish tales of chivalry as well as to the assimilated collective unconscious.

---

[1] Jacobi, loc. cit., p. 102; cf. Teresa's use of the number "seven" to indicate "many mansions, above, and below and around. . .", Moradas, I, ii, 8.

[2] "All made of a single stone." Cf. A. Durán, ed., Romancero general, Vol. II. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, (Vol. 16, Madrid, 1849), p. 647.

[3] Cf., for example, Amadís de Gaula, Bk. II, Ch. I, "El arco y la cámara." Libros de Caballerías. ed. Don Pascual de Gayangos. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, (Vol. 40, Madrid, 1857). p. 109.

[4] Vida, I, 2.

Teresa's symbol for the human personality, "un castillo todo de un diamente," has all the features of medieval allegory in the tale of chivalry: The soul castle must have a firm foundation (the virtue of humility) in order to assure its noble heights and prevent its fall under siege.[1] There is but one way to gain entrance to the castle (the door of prayer).[2] Stewards and vassals (senses and faculties) are at the service of the castle's Lord;[3] he alone gives admittance to its mansions, gardens, and fountains (the graces of self-possession and self-giving in love to the personal Infinite).[4] He, the Lord of the castle, invites the soul into the innermost mansion there to dwell in happiness with him forever (the mystical marriage).[5]

The mystic is herself the dwelling place of God, of Christ whose Spirit lives in her. He unites himself to her in so personal a way that his living presence permeates her personality without detracting from its uniqueness or individuality. There is a new appreciation of this intense experience of God within the human personality when we grasp the force of Teresa's castle symbol. Detached from the Spanish landscape and from the pages of legend and myth, the medieval castle of the self, formed of the single diamond of personal integrity, lends its splendid facets to an understanding of the complexity of inner, spiritual-psychological being. At the same time, the journey through its many mansions marks the progressive stages of a relationship with divinity perfecting and fulfilling the human personality. The mystic is a consecrated temple-castle, spirit-body-soul conformed to the image of him who dwells within her, in whose image she is created, and whose redemption she experiences as a reclamation of her selfhood.

---

[1] VII, iv, 8.

[2] I, i, 7.

[3] I, ii, 12.

[4] VII, i, 3.

[5] VII, iii, 11.

CHAPTER IV

THE SYMBOL OF THE SPOUSE

Up to this point our study of the symbolism of the Interior Castle has revealed the historical, theological, and psychological universality of Saint Teresa's key symbol. The image of the soul as castle has enjoyed a continuing tradition based on the universal acceptance of the dwelling place as symbol for the human spirit open to the divine inhabitation. In the writings of Saint Teresa the castle symbol assumes its entire range of meaning: from the temple or dwelling for divinity to the crystal of center of the self. But it is in combining it with the image of the Spouse, "His Majesty who dwells within," that Teresa refines the castle symbol, raising it to the level of Christian personalism.

In the present chapter, we propose to study the historical, theological, and psychological universality of the Spouse symbol. Our investigation should lead beyond an assessment of the force of the imagery of love in expressing the consciousness of the divine indwelling. It should bring us to an appreciation of the power of the combined symbolism of the castle and the Spouse in conveying the mystical reality of divine-human union as a personalized experience.

As in the case of the castle symbol, Saint Teresa inherited her second religious symbol from the imagery of cosmogonic myths, from

XUM

the scriptural bridal symbol as interpreted by the Fathers and employed by the mystics, and from the archetype of the collective unconscious. Again, as in the case of the castle symbol, there is in the saint's use of the Spouse symbol a personalizing factor, her cultural background and her own native touch, creating for the Interior Castle a peculiarly Teresian symbolism. This symbolism returns to the roots of symbolic representation and extends to the heights of mystical consciousness.

The Cosmic Marriage Symbol

The concept of the wedding of heaven and earth seems to underlie all religious notions of the God-man relationship. From the mythological expressions of creation and cosmic renewal, through Revelation's presentation of the Creator's covenant relationship with his creatures, to the Incarnation's embodiment of the unity of divinity and humanity, marriage symbolizes the reality of divine love and its human response.[1] The creation myths which express the primitive spiritual experience of all races present at least a common "spousal" framework for the drama of creation.

> The hierogamy of sky and earth, or of the sun and moon, is often thought of in quite literal terms: "ut maritus supra feminam in coitione iacet, sic coelum supra terram." . . . the same anthropomorphism is used even in the most

---

[1] Cf. Eliade, Cosmos and History, pp. 23-25; Hugo Rahner, Man at Play (New York, 1967), p. 48.

developed symbolism of alchemy, relating to the union between the sun and the moon, and in other cases of coniunctio between cosmological or spiritual principles.[1]

Again, the cosmogonic myths are archetypal expressions for all human "creations": biological, psychological, spiritual. The myths of "quest" or "self-conquest" often lead their heroes through the spot where heaven is wedded to earth.[2] Together with their many other implications, these myths carry the meaning that perfection, wholeness, fulfillment, lie in the unity of heaven and earth, in the marriage of divinity with humanity. Often the hero of such myths celebrates his triumph over all adversaries and the end of his "dark journey" with the hierosgamos or sacred marriage with the goddess-mother of the world.[3]

Cultic practices among ancient religions frequently included the sacred marriage. Typifying the union of earth and heaven, the marriage rite formed a part of certain fertility rites and/or New Year festivals. This was humankind's way of re-inserting itself annually into the life of divinity. Thus has the human mind throughout the ages understood and expressed, in terms of the nuptial union, its human response to "the holy," its creaturely liason with the Infinite, its hope of fulfillment through union with divinity.

---

[1] Eliade, Patterns, pp. 411-412. [2] Ibid., p. 427.

[3] Cf. Gerald Vann, Paradise Tree, p. 18.

The Marriage Symbol in Sacred Scripture

Revealed religion, too, is replete with the fundamental spousal imagery. Throughout the pages of the Old Testament the union of God and man is presented through the marriage symbol. Humanity is destined to be "wedded" to God. Israel is the virgin bride of Yahweh. Symbolically, the very lives of the prophets depicted the relations between Yahweh and his bride.[1] Hosea in his unhappy marriage lived out the story of Israel's infidelity to her God and God's ever-merciful fidelity to his unfaithful people.[2] Jeremiah, the celibate, illustrated in his own life the lonely, unproductive fate of the people who had alienated themselves from God and were doomed to be supplanted by the "new Israel." Thus Jeremiah condemns Israel as the unfaithful spouse: "Surely, as a faithless wife leaves her husband, so have you been faithless to me."[3]

More positively, the prophecy of Isaiah uses the marriage symbol to reinforce the divine promise of fidelity despite Israel's sin and its consequences. Jerusalem will yet be the Lord's bride:

---

[1] Hos. 2, 21 ff; Joel. 1, 8; Is. 54, 4 ff; 62, 5; Jer. 3, 1; Ez.16, 6-43.

[2] Hos. 1-3.

[3] Jer. 3, 20; cf. Lucien Legrand, The Biblical Doctrine of Virginity, pp. 27-29.

> No more shall men call you "Forsaken," or your land "Desolate," but you shall be called "My Delight," and your land "Espoused." For the Lord delights in you and makes your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a Bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.[1]

In the light of this scriptural tradition of the marriage symbol's expression of God's relationship with men, early Jewish exegesis interpreted the Canticle of Canticles. This beautiful love-song of the Old Testament was seen as a description, in terms of human love, of the relationship between Yahweh and his chosen people. In the strictly literal sense, "Solomon's Canticle" is no more than a composite poem of human love. But Christian tradition, too, has ever looked upon human love as symbolic of divine love to which it is inherently directed. Therefore, in the fuller or typical sense, the lover of Canticles, who is king and shepherd to his beloved, becomes a figure of Christ; the beloved, who seeks and is sought by his love, is the Church; the mystics saw her, in an adapted sense, as a figure of the individual soul, the bride of Christ.

Almost any section of the Old Testament's love song lends itself to the various levels of interpretation--literal, symbolic, psychological, mystical:

> I belong to my lover and for me he yearns.
> Come, my lover, let us go forth to the fields
>   and spend the night among the villages.

---

[1] Is. 62, 4-5; cf. 54, 4; cf. Jer. 31, 3-4.

Let us go early to the vineyards and see
    if the vines are in bloom,
If the buds have opened,
    if the pomegranates have blossomed;
There will I give you my love.
The mandrakes give forth fragrance,
    and at our doors are all choice fruits;
Both fresh and mellowed fruits, my lover,
    I have kept in store for you.[1]

It is evident, too, that some of the so-called Royal Psalms of Sacred Scripture have their origin in the ancient royal marriage ode which easily lent itself to symbolic interpretation. At first, the role of the Bridegroom was assigned to Yahweh, but gradually Jewish tradition transferred it to the Messiah, the promised one. Psalm forty-five is an example:

Your divine throne endures forever and ever.
Your royal sceptor is a sceptor of equity;
You love righteousness and hate wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
    with the oil of gladness above your fellows;
Your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes
    and cassia.

Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear;
    forget your people and your father's house;
    and the king will desire your beauty. . . .[2]

In the Gospels the nuptial symbol persists, although it is infrequently used, veiling yet revealing the incarnate presence of the divine Bridegroom. The children of the bridechamber cannot fast while the Bridegroom is with them;[3] the King makes a marriage supper for his son, to which all are called;[1] in the parable of the Ten Virgins the Bridegroom comes at midnight;[2] human joy is complete with the coming of the Bridegroom.[3]

---

[1] Cant. 7, 11-14.

[2] Ps. 45, 6-8, 9-11.

[3] Mk. 2, 19.

When Paul, the Apostle of the new Jerusalem, took up the symbolism of the wedding of God and man he could point to this finality of the symbol in God Incarnate. In accordance with the Old Testament's concept of the bride's not being an individual but a community, Paul sees the Church as the bride of Christ, as the reality of the divine union with humanity in and through God-Made-Man. However, in at least one use of the nuptial symbol Paul refers to the individual Christian's "belonging to another," that is to Christ, in order to "bear fruit for God."[4]

The likeness between marriage and Christ's relationship to his Church receives full treatment in the Epistle to the Ephesians.[5] The reality of human marriage symbolizes--that is, partakes of--the reality of Christ's union with his Mystical Body. The sanctifying love of Christ for his Church is "a great mystery." Although the parallel between human marriage and the union of Christ and his Church is meant to illumine both the Christian doctrine on marriage and that on the mystery of the Church, Paul's emphasis is on the latter. It is to this purpose that he quotes Genesis 2, 24. The marriage symbol, he asserts, has many implications, but its greatest application is to Christ's union with his Church:

---

[1] Mt. 22, 2.

[2] Mt. 25, 5.

[3] Jn. 3, 29.

[4] Rom. 7, 4.

[5] Eph. 5, 22-23; cf. Lucien Cerfaux, La Theologie del "Eglise suivant Saint Paul (Paris, 1965) pp. 179-194; Le Chrétien dans la theologie Paulinienne (Paris, 1962) pp. 324-342.

> "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery--I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church.[1]

"Mystery" in Ephesians[2] means the divine plan of salvation as revealed and accomplished in Christ. The "great mystery" seems to be that aspect of salvation which is the intimate relationship between Christ and his mystical body. Specifically, Christ is the Bridegroom[3] and the Church is his beloved bride to be made perfect through his love.

The relationship is presented as perfected in the Book of Revelation where "the wedding of the Lamb" symbolizes the beginning of the eschatological kingdom:

> Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his spouse has prepared herself. And she has been permitted to clothe herself in fine linen, shining, bright. For the fine linen is the just deeds of the saints. . . .[4]

---

[1] Eph. 5, 31-32.

[2] Cf. Eph. 3, 9.

[3] Cf. 2 Cor. 11, 2.

[4] Rev. 19, 7-8.

XUM

> And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. . . .[1]

> "Come, I will show you the bride, the spouse of the Lamb." And he took me up in spirit to a mountain, great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. . . .[2]

The Bridal Symbol As Interpreted by the Fathers

Thus in the fulness of time the strands of humankind's penchant for the wedding symbol were woven together to depict the eternal divine-human relationship. The union of the Logos with human nature in the womb of the virgin is a mystery of wedlock. The mothering womb is also a bridal chamber in which God is wedded to humanity. The works of the Fathers are full of this concept:[3] Christ, the divine Bridegroom, and the Ecclesial bride are "one flesh." From all eternity humanity was destined, as the bride of Christ, to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity. In order to bring his Bride home, the Eternal Word became incarnate that he might draw all men into the embrace of his love.

Origen

Within this theology of the marriage of Christ and his Church, Origen inserted the bridal mysticism of the individual soul and Christ.

---

[1] Rev. 21, 2.

[2] Rev. 21, 9-10.

[3] Cf. Augustine, Confessions, IV, 12; Enarrationes in Psalmos, 18, 6 (ACW, 29); Clement of Alexandria, Pedagogue, I, 5, 22, 1.

In his allegorical interpretation of Canticles he applied its symbolism to both the Church and the individual Christian:

> It seems to me that this little book is an epithalamium, that is to say, a marriage-song, which Solomon wrote in the form of a drama and sang under the figure of the Bride, about to wed and burning with heavenly love towards her Bridegroom, who is the Word of God. And deeply indeed did she love Him, whether we take her as the soul made in His image, or as the Church. But this same scripture also teaches us what words this august and perfect Bridegroom used in speaking to the soul, or to the Church, who has been joined to Him.[1]

For Origen the Song of Songs is primarily a mystical poem[2] whose theme is the love and longing of the soul who "falls deeply in love with God's loveliness and receives from the Word Himself a certain dart and wound of love."[3] In this interpretation of Canticles as a dramatic poem with a parabolic or allegorical significance, Origen set the style for most of the ancient and medieval mystics.

We shall see that our sixteenth century Spanish mystic was attracted by the same sexual symbols from the Song of Songs as a means of expressing her experience of the spiritual marriage. Saint Teresa's many references to the scriptural marriage song share the characteristics of Origen's Commentary: The same appreciation of

---

[1] Origen, The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies, "Prologue," (ACW, 26) p. 21.

[2] Cf. Ibid., p, 22.

[3] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

XUM

the bridal union of Christ and his Church as effected in each soul; the same experience of the progressive unfolding of the divine life in the human soul; the same emphasis on "the wound of love"; and the same ascent beyond detachment from things of the world through self-knowledge, to mystical communion with the divine Lover:

> The soul is moved by heavenly love and longing when, having clearly beheld the beauty and the fairness of the Word of God, it falls deeply in love with His loveliness and receives from the Word Himself a certain dart and wound of love. . . . If, then, a man can so extend his thinking as to ponder and consider the beauty and the grace of all the things that have been created in the Word, the very charm of them will so smite him, the grandeur of their brightness will so pierce him as with a chosen dart--as says the prophet (Is. 49, 2)--that he will suffer from the dart himself a saving wound, and will be kindled with the blessed fire of His love.[1]

Saint Gregory of Nyssa

Saint Gregory of Nyssa's Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles is a brilliant development of Origen's allegorical interpretation. Like Origen, Gregory leaves the reader in no doubt as to his option of the "mystical marriage" allegory for the epithalamium of the Old Testament.[2] He justifies his adaptation of the theme of Canticles to the individual soul by alluding to the scriptural accounts of the lovers of God. The soul's enjoyment of Christ, he says, is best illustrated by a Moses, an Isaiah, a John the Baptist, a Peter, and a Paul.[1]

---

[1] Origen, Commentary on the Song of Songs, "Prologue," op. cit., pp. 29-30.

[2] Commentary on Canticles, Sermon 1 (PG 44, 776A-777C); Danielou, From Glory to Glory, pp. 153-154.

It is worthy of note that Saint Teresa, despite her lack of knowledge of the Fathers, makes direct reference in the Interior Castle to those elements in the Song of Songs which had deepest appeal for the early Christian mystics. Like Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Teresa chooses the symbols of the dove, of the Good Shepherd, of the wine-cellar, and of the kiss of the divine Lover to elaborate on the experiences of the heights of mystical union. Like Gregory also, Saint Teresa derives practical doctrine from the allegory of the bride's search for the Beloved: Self-knowledge, humility, and the ordering of charity are the means of human fulfillment, that is, of the perfection of union with God.[2]

We shall see also that Teresa had a deep appreciation of that rule of the life of the spirit which was Saint Gregory's chief teaching: the rule of perpetual spiritual progress. Cardinal Danielou[3] sees the doctrine epitomized in Gregory's use of the term epectasis ("tension" or "expansion"). Gregory takes the idea and the term from Saint Paul's "forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forward to those that are before."[1] It is a characteristic of the spiritual life to consider each arrival at a certain peak of divine union as a point of departure for new heights. "Every perfection is a principle of a higher good."[2] Or, as Saint Gregory says of the bride of the Canticles:

---

[1] Ibid., p. 155.

[2] Moradas VI and VII; V, i, 12; ii, 12; etc.; cf. p. 196 below.

[3] Danielou, From Glory to Glory, p. 56.

> She always seems to be beginning anew. For this reason the Word says once again to His awakened bride: *Arise*; and when she has come, *Come*. For he who is rising can always rise further; and for him who runs to the Lord the open field of the divine course is never exhausted. We must therefore constantly arouse ourselves and never stop drawing closer in our course. For as often as He says *Arise* and *Come*, He gives us the power to rise and make progress.[3]

Saint Augustine

As we noticed above, Teresa was attracted by Saint Augustine's expressions of the presence of God. Hers was an instinctive assessment of the great Western doctor's persuasion and intimate comprehension of the divine indwelling. Augustine's statement, "If I remain not in Him, neither shall I in myself,"[4] summarizes his doctrine on human fulfillment. This it is that makes of his autobiographical *Confessions* a theocentric work:

---

[1] Phil. 3, 13.

[2] Danielou, *loc. cit.*, p. 67.

[3] St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on Canticles*, PG 44, 876C.

[4] *Confessions*, VII, 11.

> This Life of ours came down here and took up our death and slew it from the abundance of His own life. He has thundered forth the summons for us to return from here to Him, into that hidden place, whence first He proceeded to us into that virginal womb, wherein the human creature was wedded to Him--mortal flesh, lest it be always mortal. And from His bedchamber, He bounded forth as a giant to run His course. . .[1]

Here Saint Augustine seizes upon scripture's image of the Incarnation, the union of the divine and human natures, as a mystery of wedlock. Christ is the husband, human nature the wife. His love for her will form and redeem her as the Ecclesia sancta.[2]

Comparable to this and similar passages in the writing of Augustine is Teresa's emphasis on the presence of Christ and the mystic's dependence upon "a clear revelation of His Sacred Humanity."[3] In the person of Jesus Christ, God and the human personality communicate in a relationship otherwise never to be experienced.

The Nuptial Symbol in Medieval Mysticism

Saint Bernard

It was Saint Bernard who established the medieval trend toward the accommodation of Sacred Scripture to the idea of the individual soul as the "bride" of Canticles. His elaboration of the nuptial symbol was to make of it the predominant feature of future mystical writing. However, Bernard's use of the symbol is securely grounded in the primary interpretation of the Bride of Canticles as the Church, the people of God, caught up in the embrace of Christ the Bridegroom. Interesting for the light it sheds upon medieval incarnational theology is Saint Bernard's commentary on the first line of Canticles, "Kiss me with the kiss of His mouth":

---

[1] Ibid., IV, 12.

[2] Cf. Contra Faustum Manichaeum, XXII, 46 (CSEL, 25), pp. 638-639.

[3] Moradas, VI, ix, 3; cf. Ch. VI, p. 158 below.

> Let the mouth that gives the kiss be the Word becoming Flesh. Let the Flesh (Human Nature) which is assumed be the mouth that receives the kiss--a kiss, in truth, perfected equally by Him who gives and Him who receives it--a single Person subsisting in two natures, the Mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus. . . . Happy kiss! in which God is united to Man. . . . This union of natures joins things human with those that are divine.[1]

Then Saint Bernard moves to the application of the symbol to the personal experience of the mystic--the individual assimilation into the God-life:

> I should like to discover if to anyone of you it has ever been given to say with sincerity: "Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His mouth." For it is not the privilege of every man to speak these words out of a real desire of heart. But if anyone has ever once received this spiritual kiss from the mouth of Christ, that personal experience stirs him to his soul's depths and filled with delight, he eagerly prays that the favor may again be granted him.[2]

Specifically, Bernard can find no symbol more fitting than the spiritual marriage for the expression of mystical love.

---

[1] Sermon II, 2, Connolly, Saint Bernard, p. 72.

[2] Sermon III, 1, Ibid., p. 73.

> "Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His mouth." Who speaks? The bride. Who is she? The soul thirsting for God. . . . If one is a servant he is in dread of his lord's face. If one is a hireling he hopes for pay from his lord's hand. If one is a disciple he gives ear to his teacher. If one is a son he honors his father. But the soul who begs a kiss is in love. Among the gifts of nature this affection holds first place, especially when it makes haste to return to its origin, which is God. Words cannot express the sweet affection of the Word and the soul for each other, except Bride and Bridegroom.[1]

Unequivocally, the relationship is a personal one, inexpressible except in the imagery of the Canticles. The mystical marriage is not only an awareness of the presence of God, but an active participation in the life of God. In the union of the soul with God, as Saint Bernard says, "the Word utters no sound, but penetrates. . . making glad the heart not with the charm of colour, but with the love it bestows."[2] The spiritual marriage leads to spiritual fecundity, to an apostolic concern for the relationship of others with God.

Perhaps this latter consideration is the one in which Saint Teresa's evaluation of the contemplative experience most closely resembles that of Saint Bernard. On no occasion does she describe the ecstatic reality of the spiritual marriage without reference to its fruitfulness. At the moment of her arrival at "the second Heaven" or the Seventh Mansion of the spiritual marriage she is acutely aware of the needs of souls in mortal sin and the spiritual "almsgiving" which the contemplative must practice towards such souls.[1] The chief effect of the soul's being made one with Christ, she says, is the insatiable desire to do everything possible to advance His glory and honor and to bring others to Him.[2] Of the appreciation of mystical prayer in the Seventh Mansion she writes: "We should desire to engage in prayer not for our own enjoyment, but for the sake of acquiring this strength which fits us for service."[3]

---

[1] Sermon VII, 2, Ibid., p. 77.

[2] St. Bernard, Canticles, 31, 6. Butler, Western Mysticism. (Third ed. New York, 1967) p. 119.

Ruysbroeck

As we brought out in Chapter III, two later medieval mystics, Jan van Ruysbroeck and Ramon Lull, seem to have had a profound influence upon Spanish mysticism. We have seen that it was a profound but hidden influence. Scholarship has failed to unearth any direct link between the northern mystic, Ruysbroeck, or his counterpart in Majorca, Lull, and Saints Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. But, as we have indicated, the study of symbolism points to a common heritage that is unmistakable. Similarities between Teresa's symbolism and that of her predecessors may be attributed both to the universal structure of religious symbolism and to the common ground of scriptural symbolism. We have seen, also, that there are certain literary connections between Teresa and the later medieval mystics, namely, the works of Francisco de Osuna and Bernardino de Laredo.

---

[1] Moradas. VII, i, 4.

[2] Moradas, VII, iii, 6-8.

[3] Moradas, VII, iv. 12.

In Ruysbroeck's Prologue to The Spiritual Espousals there is a clear expression of the incarnational depths of the spiritual marriage symbol:

> "See the Bridegroom comes; go out to meet him.". . . This Bridegroom is Christ, and man's nature the bride, whom God has made in the image of Himself.[1]

In the three parts of the ensuing work, Ruysbroeck particularizes the nuptial imagery in terms which point to common ground with the imagery of Saint Teresa. The soul is "a kingdom over which the beloved rules"; He who "possesses and guards his soul and has set it in order, he has gone out with love and virtue to God and to himself and to his fellow Christian."[2] Ruysbroeck likens the coming of Christ to the soul to a "divine fount of water" and to the shining and the power of the sun.[3] Christ is Shepherd, King and Bridegroom. He is the divine Light by means of which men "behold and feel and discover themselves."[4]

---

[1] Jan van Ruysbroeck, The Spiritual Espousals. trans., Eric Colledge (London, 1952) Prologue.

[2] Ibid., Book I, Cap. 31.

[3] Ibid., Book II, Cap. 14.

[4] Ibid., Book III, Cap. 8.

XUM

Ramón Lull

Once again, our focus on symbolism sheds light upon a common heritage for Teresa and Ramón Lull--both in the order of grace and in the order of the national mystical spirit with its concrete, experiential expression of divine-human love. It would seem that those who rise to the highest level of human experience, rising in the power of the same Spirit, seize the same visible realities with which to present the inexplicable realities that lie beyond. Throughout his best known work, Blanquerna, Ramón Lull utilizes the spousal imagery. There is no doubt but that in the two complementary parts of this book, "The Book of the Lover and the Beloved," and "The art of Contemplation," Lull is describing the same definite stage of charity or level of contemplative sanctity which Saint Teresa describes with the vistas de esposos of the Sixth Mansions:

> The Lover and the Beloved met, and the Beloved said to the Lover: Thou needst not to speak to Me. Sign to Me only with thine eyes--for they are words to my heart--that I may give thee that which thou dost ask.[1]

In Lull, too, we find Teresa's characteristic emphasis on the humanity of Christ and the mystic's predilection for contemplation on the Lord's Prayer.[2]

---

[1] Ramón Lull, The Book of the Lover and the Beloved, Cap. 29; Cf. Teresa's "Vistas del Esposo," V, iv, 3 and VI, v, 11.

[2] Lull, Cap. 31; cf. Saint Teresa, Camino de Perfección.

The Spouse Symbol in Contemporary Literature

Osuna

Once again it can be said that the heritage of medieval mysticism reached Saint Teresa principally through the writing of Francisco de Osuna and Bernardino de Laredo. We have noted that Osuna is an obvious secondary source for Teresa's acquaintance with the mystical tradition of the Fathers.[1] Through him came Teresa's affinity with the temple symbol of Saint Bonaventure and the nuptial symbolism of Saint Bernard. Osuna never explicates the marriage symbol; never, for example, differentiates between spiritual betrothal and spiritual marriage. Characteristically, there is in his work no analysis of stages or steps of progress in the soul's bridal relationship with God. But in the mystical symbolism of bridehood he adroitly describes the realities of the Church's bridehood with Christ and of the individual's sacramental and contemplative union with the divine Spouse.

The soul of every Christian is espoused to God in Baptism, writes Osuna, and he explains how the longing of contemplative love intensifies the bond of spiritual marriage.[2] Basing his doctrine on that of Saints Gregory, Augustine, and Bernard, Osuna describes the joys of union with God in this world as well as in the next: "You will enter more deeply into this joy in heaven in proportion to your entrance into it while you are on earth."[1] He calls God "the supreme Lover" who grants "the hundredfold of spiritual consolation" even in this life.[2] Osuna is also one of Teresa's sources for her familiar epithet, "His Majesty, the King," and for her use of the dove symbol from Canticles.[3]

---

[1] Cf. Ch. III, p. 65 above.

[2] Third Spiritual Alphabet, Tenth Treatise, Ch. II.

De Laredo

Another important work, which we have mentioned already in connection with the castle symbol, also guided Saint Teresa in her experience and expression of the spiritual marriage.[4] This was Bernardino de Laredo's Ascent of Mount Sion. De Laredo's frequent quotation of the Fathers acquainted Teresa with the early Christian interpretation of the nuptial imagery of Sacred Scripture. Again we find the dove image predominant as de Laredo interprets Canticles and applies its symbolism, after the manner of the Fathers, to contemplative union:

---

[1] Ibid., Twelfth Treatise, Ch. V.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Seventh Treatise, Ch. V; Ninth Treatise, Ch. I; Sixteenth Treatise, Ch. IX, etc.; cf. Chapter VI, p.126 below for the psychological force of these symbols.

[4] It is doubtful that Teresa had any acquaintance with Fray Luis de León's Exposición del Cantar de las Cantares which was begun about the year 1561-62, but was published, in Latin, in 1582.

> In the second Chapter of the Book of Canticles, the Bridegroom of the Church, Christ Jesus our Beloved, says these mellifluous words: "My dove is the only one, etc." Elsewhere He calls her "my love" and entreats her to open to Him. Now, since, as was explained in Chapter seventeen, the Church is the heritage of Jesus Christ, and every righteous soul is part of this heritage, and since our God calls this His Church a dove, it remains to be said that, when the soul knows Holy Church (of which it is a part) it longs for the wings of living desire which this wondrous dove possesses, desires awakened by her perfect doctrine and with which it can rise in loving flight to its most loving God in whom is true consolation.[1]

Psychological Basis for the Spouse Symbol

Since de Laredo was a physician as well as a religious, his work reveals a lively interest in the psychological growth of the human spirit during the course of the contemplative life. From his writings Saint Teresa must have absorbed some of her interest in the psychology of the mystical life. Not that we claim for her or for her illustrious predecessor any conscious scientific approach to a psychological analysis of the contemplative spirit. Yet it is to our purpose to observe, just as in the case of the castle symbol, evidence of a universal psychological basis for the nuptial symbolism of the Interior Castle.

We have seen from the history of the spouse symbol that it has concretized the divine-human relationship for religions of different ages and of many cultures. Somewhere in the bedrock of the individual religious consciousness, through the "collective unconscious", the religious experiences and concepts of all humankind live on. In the light of Saint Teresa's symbolism it is possible to grasp something of the inner structure of such experiences and concepts as they are intensified by the light of mysticism.

---

[1] The Ascent of Mount Sion, Part Three, Ch. XIX, p. 134.

It is precisely in such an intensification of human experience that modern psychology is able to look into and evaluate the self-identifying and self-actualizing process of the human personality.[1] Certain contemporary psychologists, seeking their norms in the healthy personality rather than in the unhealthy one, in human "wholeness" rather than in personality "problems," find rich material in the symbolism of the mystics.[2]

The mystical experience, especially as presented in the symbol of the spiritual marriage, is the ideal illustration of Carl Jung's "experience of the self"[3] or Abraham Maslow's "peak-experience."[4] The individual's consciousness of the more or less habitual state of union with God is, on the psychological level, an experience of whole-

---

[1] Cf. Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1968) Chs. 6 and 7. We are indebted to Professor Maslow for the ideas which set in motion much of our thinking on the psychology of the marriage symbol.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

[3] Cf. "Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (*Collected Works*, Vol. 7) pp. 235-238.

[4] *loc. cit.* pp. 71-114.

XUM

ness, integrity, completeness of the personality without any implications of self-centeredness. Marriage symbolizes that sublime union of wills in which personal selfhood is most completely realized in the act of perfect self-giving. Nuptial union with God literally realizes the biblical paradox of losing one's life in order to find it. Psychologically, self-actualization is but a step in the process of "the transcendence of identity."[1]

The mystical union has the effect of fusing, transcending or resolving paradoxes and polarities. At times the ecstatic experience seems to present a vision of the infinite variety of supernatural realities, as exemplified in Teresa's figure of the camarín,[2] the room of the palace where an infinite variety of objets d'art are on display. The beauty of the entire room can be taken in at a glance, and yet there is so much to be seen that, while the impression of its beauty lasts, details are lost to the vision and to the memory. At times, however, "some little part of the kingdom" is perceived as if it were all that existed, as if in the rapture of belonging to God, His bride sees all things in the light of His greatness.[3]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 114. Here Maslow admits his inability to understand how it is that man "finds himself" in the peak experience only to "lose himself." "The goal of identity seems to be simultaneously an end-goal in itself and also a transitional goal."

[2] Moradas, VI, iv, 8.

[3] Moradas, VI, iv, 9.

Mystical consciousness of divine union is at once an experience of wholeness and uniqueness, a fusion of inner and outer reality--aptly expressed by the symbol of the oneness of human love. The mystical marriage actualizes the paradox of unity and individuality at the highest level of human reality, the level of at-one-ness with divinity. Through this ultimate spiritual and psychic experience the soul "finds herself" in an ever deepening sense, for "just as the greatness of God is without limits, even so are His works."[1]

Another paradox of mystical love to which we have alluded already[2] is the "newness" which is ever to be found in a familiar and long-standing relationship. No matter how intimate and integrating the love experience may become, the lover finds in the Beloved an ever greater, ever more wondrous object of love and knowledge. "Who will ever come to an end of recounting His mercies and wonders?"[3] "And love, I believe, will never be content to stay for long where it is."[4]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 1; cf. Jolande Jacobi, The Psychology of C.G. Jung, pp. 127-128: "But the self is also a psychic category and can be experienced as such; to depart for the moment from the language of psychology, we might call it the 'central fire,' our individual share in God, or Meister Eckhart's 'little spark.' It is the early Christian ideal of the Kingdom of God that is 'within you.' It is the ultimate in psychic experience and in man's knowledge of the psyche."

[2] Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, p. 94 , above; Moradas, VII, ii, 2; VII, iv, 9.

[3] Moradas, VII, i, 1.

[4] Moradas, VII, iv, 9.

The supreme love experience of the mystical marriage also bears the characteristic temporal and spatial disorientations of the peak-experience. Judgment of the passing of time and consciousness of external surroundings are often inaccurate and irrelevant. Unlike the ordinary experiences of life, mystical experience is not embedded in history, in culture, or in the needs of man. Perhaps this explains, at least in part, the universality of the nuptial symbol for the mystical union, despite the wide variations among the mystics in time, geography, and culture.[1]

The values or effects of intense mystical experience also shed light upon the psychological force of the spiritual marriage symbol. Saint Teresa, at a loss to describe the experience itself, is content to describe its "striking effects." These she lists simply as: "Self-forgetfulness, a great desire to participate in the redemptive suffering of the Spouse, an overwhelming desire to serve him in one's fellowmen, and a deep tranquility of soul--an inner peace which transcends all disquiet and can only indicate the presence of the Lord.[1] There is, in other words, a God-like perception of all things through which the soul united to God sees values in the external world as completely uncolored by its own values.

---

[1] Cf. Ignace Lepp, The Depth of the Soul, pp. 263-264. Lepp's comment on the mystic saints' use of nuptial imagery is based upon his thesis that the libido is to be defined far more broadly than in the Freudian sense. It is to be understood as "affective psychic energy. It is indeterminate in itself and it can be utilized by any psychic function." This, he says, explains the mystics' use of the spiritual marriage symbol. "The direct experience they have of the divinity is, on their own admission, absolutely ineffable. In order to give even an approximate idea of what they have experienced, they naturally turn to ideas and images that belong to the most intensively affective of psychic functions."

The psychological finality or integrity evidenced by these effects becomes almost tangible in the marriage symbol. The imagery of love when applied to divinity gives God personal identity; more than that, it gives the human person an identity and fulfillment otherwise never experienced. Rooted in incarnational theology, the nuptial symbol becomes an expression of the close connection between God's becoming Man and man's becoming man. Because divinity has united itself to humanity, humanity attains its perfection.[2] In the personal life of the individual, union with Christ (being called and being loved by him and responding to the vocation by loving him) effects the acute identity experience described by the psychologists: "The greatest attainment of identity, autonomy, or selfhood is itself simultaneously a transcending of itself, a going beyond and above selfhood."[3]

The best paradigm for understanding this fulness of selfhood is the nuptial love relationship. Here there is a "simultaneous letting-be of the self and of the other"[4] The wholeness of life which is found in the union with Christ, in total self-giving, in a fusion of wills is at one and the same time the attainment of "the real self and the transcendent self."[1] The paradox of love symbolized by the spiritual marriage is the paradox of giving all only to find oneself the receiver of all, of loving only to become the beloved, of being acutely conscious of uniqueness, self-awareness and self-identity while uniting one's will with the will of another.

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iii, 2-8.

[2] i. e. Maslow's "full-humanness", op. cit., pp. iv and vii.

[3] Maslow, op. cit., p. 114. [4] Ibid., p. 105.

The joy conveyed by the symbol cannot be overlooked:

> The joy of the soul is so exceedingly great that it would like, not to rejoice in God in solitude, but to tell its joy to all, so that they may help it to praise Our Lord, to which end it directs its whole activity. Oh, what high festival such a one would make to this end and how she would show forth her joy, if she could, so that all should understand it! For she seems to have found herself. . . .[2]

The peak-experience of mystical union attains a level of perception beyond that attributed to aesthetical or philosophical insight. It reaches to the deepest psychological ground of the human spirit, the inner sanctuary where self-awareness goes beyond analytical reflection and opens out into metaphysical and theological confrontation with the Spirit of God. Saint Teresa states it simply: "The soul becomes one with God."[3]

Teresa comes closest to transmitting to us her experience of the indescribable reality of the divine indwelling in those passages in which she speaks of grasping or realizing the words of Sacred Scripture--words which "come alive" within the Seventh Mansion of the soul. For her, scriptural symbol has become the reality of experience:

---

[1] Ibid., p. 109.

[2] Moradas, VI, vi, 10.

[3] Moradas, VII, ii, 3.

> Here all three Persons communicate themselves to the soul and speak to the soul and explain to it those words which the Gospel attributes to the Lord--namely, that He and the Father and the Holy Spirit will come to dwell with the soul which loves Him and keeps His commandments. (Jn 14, 23) Oh God help me! What a difference there is between hearing and believing these words and being led in this way to realize how true they are.[1]

One other psychological factor should be mentioned as contributing to Saint Teresa's spontaneous choice of the nuptial symbol. This is the above-mentioned attraction[2] which the Spanish literature of chivalry had had for the youthful Teresa. In the romantic adventures of the libros de caballerías where knightly heroes sought fulfillment and human perfection in courtly love, Teresa, at least subconsciously, found a model for the symbol of the spiritual marriage.

For the Castillian spirit of Teresa of Avila the step from the romantic imagery of la orden de caballería to the symbol of the spiritual marriage was a natural one, yet a step involving mystical inspiration as well as all the richness of natural psychological symbolism. The medieval princess liberated from her castle by the knight errant does not simply become a figure of the soul liberated from itself by the love of God. The implications of the symbol outstrip romantic imagination. The transforming kiss of the Bridegroom is Revelation's structuring of the personal relationship between the Triune God and humanity.

---

[1] Ibid., VII, i, 6-7: "Aquí se le comunican todas tres Personas, y la hablan, y la dan a entender aquellas palabras que dice el Evangelio que dijo el Señor--que vernía El y el Padre y el Espíritu Santo a morar con el alma que le ama y guarda sus mandamientos. ¡Oh, válgame Dios, cuán diferente cosa es oír estas palabras y creerlas, a entender por esta manera cuán verdaderas son!"

[2] cf. Ch. III, p. 79 , above; Vida, ii, 1.

Teresa's symbolism explicates this personal relationship with God who invites the individual soul to intimate union with himself and, in him, to personal relationships with others. God is present in the human spirit not only as divine power within a temple but as the love of the Spouse within the beloved. The temple as image for the kingdom within is personalized by the image of His Majesty who dwells within the soul-castle. By combining the image of the spiritual marriage with that of the interior castle Teresa perceives and expresses the divine-human relationship as the ineffable phenomenon which it is--personal, unique, transforming.

Teresa's doctrine is as old as the theology of the First Commandment: "Thou shalt love. . . ," and as new as contemporary psychology's rediscovery of the truth that the human personality can attain its own full development only in loving self-giving to another. With the image of the divine Spouse waiting within the soul-castle for the mutual exchange of divine-human love, Saint Teresa reiterates the basic truth of human fulfillment: Within each person God waits as in a living temple; in dedicating and consecrating himself to the divine Presence within, each person comes to know the splendor of his own being as lover and beloved of God.

CHAPTER V

THE SUBSIDIARY TERESIAN SYMBOLS

We have seen that Saint Teresa's castle symbol has an immediate relation to the temple image in its primitive form as the center, in its scriptural-theological use as the temple of the Spirit, and in its psychological meaning as self-individuation, self-fulfillment. Similarly, we have traced the development of the Spouse symbol and noted its relationship to the primitive idea of the wedding of humanity with divinity, the scriptural concept of the indwelling of the Trinity and the psychological reality of self-fulfillment in intimate communication with the Other. In uniting the two symbols to form a single expression of the divine indwelling, Teresa has harmonized the paradoxical joy-and-pain, darkness-and-night, fruition-and-aridity of mystical consciousness. With the unified castle-Spouse symbol she has grasped and expressed the God-man relationship. In the present chapter we shall consider the manner in which additional symbols--also of universal value and objectivity--support the effectiveness of the castle-Spouse symbolism.

In the Interior Castle Saint Teresa presents the process of the inner transformation of the human spirit through a proliferation of images for God and the soul. Symbols of light, symbols of transition, and the famous Teresian water symbol combine in a type of conceptual symbolism[1] which intensifies the meaning of the castle and Spouse symbols.

Symbols of Light

God, in addition to being the King-Spouse, is the resplendent Sun illuminating the soul-castle from its center outward. The divine presence is the light itself transmitted to the faculties in the interior part of the soul.[2] Specifically, Christ is the "Sun of justice" dwelling in the soul in order to give it the life of holiness:

> I have often thought that if the sun can remain in the heavens and yet its rays are so strong that without its moving thence they can none the less reach us here, it must be possible for the soul and the spirit, which are much the same thing as the sun and its rays, to remain where they are, and yet, through the power of the heat that comes to them from the true Sun of Justice, for some higher part of them to rise above itself.[3]

---

[1] The term "conceptual symbolism" designates the expression of an ineffable idea by a symbolic form in which the concept is so important an element that the vehicle or symbol becomes quite secondary. The symbol is not meant to be actually visualized. It but channels the important and otherwise inexpressible concept.

[2] Moradas, VII, ii, 6; ". . . se entiende claro que hay en lo interior quien arroje estas saetas y dé vida a esta vida, y que hay sol de donde procede una gran luz, que se envía a las potencias, de lo interior del alma."

[3] Moradas, VI, v, 9: "Muchas veces he pensado, si como el sol estándose en el cielo, que sus rayos tienen tanta fuerza que, no mudándose él de allí, de presto llegan acá si el alma y el espíritu, que son una mesma cosa, como lo es el sol y sus rayos, puede, quedándose ella en su puesto, con la fuerza del calor que le viene del verdadero Sol de Justicia, alguna parte superior salir sobre sí mesma." (Cf. also VII, i, 3.)

Here again, Saint Teresa draws from biblical symbolism.[1] The entire life of the Christian turns toward Christ, is centered on him as the Sun in whom and through whom divinity transforms humanity. Here, too, the saint makes use of her admittedly indefinable distinction between soul and spirit[2]--a distinction which gains a point in clarification through the symbolism of the sun and its rays.

Light offers a splendid image for the divine simplicity which is the source and object of the human spirit's joy and beauty. Light contains little materiality; it is readily effective on its object, making it knowable, blending with it, yet giving separate identity to its object while maintaining its own identity. In the light of God "the spirit becomes enkindled and is illumined."[3] If Teresa makes no attempt to communicate in the abstract terms of mystical theology, she succeeds in communicating on the level of symbolism. Her images pass beyond mere poetic simile or metaphor. In the images of light and fire, the aura and the warmth of the divine Presence are experienced rather than understood.

God is a fire, a spark from which touches the soul with "delectable pain. . . with tranquility and joy."[4] He is a light "unlike any to be found in this life," transporting the human spirit outside itself in order to reveal to it indescribably beautiful truth.[1] God is the mirror in which the human image is reflected, as well as the light by which man sees that image.[2] Thus the process of creature purification has periods of insights in which the soul rests in a vivid but quiet reflection on its own "becoming" under the light and the heat of the Spirit.

---

[1] Cf. Mal. 4, 2; Mt. 17, 1-2; Apoc. 1, 16.

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 11; cf. Vida, XVIII, 2; also Ch. VI, p142, below.

[3] Moradas, VII, i, 6.

[4] Moradas, VI, v. 7-9.

In its own inner depths, the human spirit preceives the action of the Triune God. This is not a question of abstract thought but of practical vision.[3] At the summit of intimate consciousness of God's presence, a mere fleeting thought of him wounds the soul with an arrow like a flash of lightning and reduces to powder everything that is earthly in human nature.[4] The transition to the Christ-life is complete. It is the modification and exaltation of an entire life pattern: "I live now not I, but Christ lives in me."[5]

From the spark which enkindles love, through the peace and joy of God's truth mirrored in the soul, and the soul's vivid consciousness of its own illumination, Saint Teresa moves upward to the moment of tremendous self-possession which knows the interior revelation of the Blessed Trinity.[6] Reverent contemplation grasps the mystery but not its expression. Christ alone expresses it. He, the Incarnation and Source of the Spirit of Love, makes present the mystery of the Triune God. In his Person, the nature of the divine relationships, inaccessible to creatures, can be glimpsed through participation in the divine-human relationship. "The Lord appears," says Saint Teresa, "in the center of the soul," by means of a subtle intellectual vision. His "instantaneous communication" of himself to the soul remains a sublime secret, comparable only to his final communication, which is the glory of heaven.[1] But God, in making his Son's humanity the object of human contemplation, presents man with a concrete vison of the Father in the Spirit.

---

[1] _Moradas_, VI, ii, 4-6

[2] _Moradas_, VII, ii, 8.

[3] _Moradas_, VII, ii, 2-3.

[4] Cf. _Moradas,_ VI, xi, 2.

[5] Gal. 2, 19.

[6] _Moradas_, VII, i, 6; cf. Ch. VI, p. 167, below.

This marks the peak of self-possession for the human spirit. Willing acceptance of the intrinsic personal relationship with the Trinity constitutes a new mode of participated being. To the simplicity of divine light is joined the soul's God-given light in "sovereign marriage which presupposes the entrance of His Majesty into the soul by union. . . as if in a room there were two large windows through which the light streamed in: it enters in different places but it all becomes one."[2]

When God and the soul become one, divine light merges with Itself reflected in the creature. Light is wedded to light. The soul

---

[1] Cf. Moradas, VII, ii, 3.

[2] Moradas, VII, ii, 4; cf. Ch. VI, p.197 below.

XUM

knows itself in God and God in itself. He is the "Sun of Justice" who gives the soul being.[1] The soul's adherence to God makes of itself a light burning for his glory and set up for the guidance of others.[2] Human consciousness thus transformed by the light of the Spirit of God takes on an entirely new life-orientation. This is the mystery of faith: "the most certain assurance of His Presence."[3] enlightening man's highest conscious relationship with God and enkindling his desire to serve his fellowman. In the light of faith man recognizes himself as the visible realization of the presence of God in the world.

Symbols of Transition

Teresa often contrasts her symbol of the soul as a clear reflection of the divine light with other images expressive of the soul's complete transition. When the human spirit has been touched by the "spark" of divine life, phoenix-like, it catches fire, dies, then from its ashes springs into new life.[4] This classic and Christian symbol, together with those of the journey,[5] the race[6] or the flight[7] of the human spirit, help concretize the experience of human orientation under grace. From the psychological point of view, these symbols embody the pursuit of individuation. To change, to travel is to seek ultimately the center of the self, the intensity of life. In God the human personality is elevated, formed, developed, re-created to become what God wills it to be: united to him, perfected in him, transformed by the union of love. This is liberty. Such liberty for the human spirit presupposes the "death", the absolute renunciation of the "old man."[1] "Die and become" summarizes the process of spiritual growth. It is a case of dying to the false, illusory, or superficial self in order to live one's deeper, true self. At the moment of the dissolution of the old form of life, there is a sense of utter darkness, void, abandonment, until the new form is realized. This is the experience which Saint Teresa has captured in her transition images.

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 3, and ii, 8.

[2] Cf. Moradas, V, x, 7-10.

[3] Moradas, VII, i, 8.

[4] Moradas, , VI, iv, 3.

[5] Moradas, III, ii, 9.

[6] Moradas, V, iv, 9.

[7] Moradas, VI, v. 9.

In the Interior Castle, the saint's one telling reference to the phoenix symbol is overshadowed by the use of the silkworm analogy.[2] The transformation of humanity by divinity, effected by the desire and activity of the soul as well as by the mystery of grace, is aptly illustrated by the short, dramatic life-cycle of the silkworm. Before drawing out her analogy, Saint Teresa calls attention to the wonders of divine wisdom and power with regard to all creation as evidenced in the industry and the transformation of the little worm. "This alone," she claims, "is sufficient for a brief meditation."[3]

---

[1] Eph. 4, 20-24.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, .

[3] Moradas, V, ii, 3.

Her comparison, she says, is fitting because it shows how "although this work (of transformation) is performed by the Lord, and we can do nothing to make the Lord grant us this favor, we can do a great deal to prepare ourselves for it."[1] Specifically, the saint is describing the receptivity of soul required for the transition from the prayer of quiet in the Fourth Mansions to the prayer of union in the Fifth Mansions.

> This silkworm. . . starts to spin its silk and to build the house in which it is to die. This house may be understood here to mean Christ. . . our life is Christ.[2]

For the moment, Teresa has inverted her original image. Now "His Majesty" becomes the Mansion in which the soul dwells.[3] This is natural inversion for the theology of the divine indwelling. As indicated by the Lord's words, "Abide in me and I in you,"[4] the secret fulfillment of divine union with the human spirit may be expressed in either or both directions. God is in the soul; the soul is in God.[1] According to the saint's image, the soul, empowered by its Maker, has spun the cocoon by means of prayer, penance, and good works. But the cocoon is merely the means to an end. The soul's dwelling is Christ. Like the silkworm, then, "let it die, as in fact it does when it has completed the work which it was created to do."[2] This death occurs during the prayer of union whence the soul emerges like the white butterfly from the worm's cocoon. "Oh the greatness of God! . . . It has wings now; how can it be content to crawl along slowly when it is able to fly?"[3]

---

[1] Moradas, V, ii, 1: ". . . aunque en esta obra que hace el Señor no podemos hacer nada mas, para que Su Majestad nos haga esta merced podemos hacer mucho dispuniéndonos.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, 5: "Este gusano. . . comienza a labra la seda y edificar las casa adonde ha de morir. Esta casa querría dar a entender aquí, que es Cristo. . . nuestra vida es Cristo."

[3] Moradas, V, ii, 6; cf. VI, x, 3: "Hagamos ahora cuenta que es Dios como una morada u palacio muy grande y hermoso, y que este palacio--como digo--es el mesmo Dios."

[4] Cf. Jn. 15, 4-7.

That the death that is spun by the human free will is difficult, Saint Teresa is quick to affirm. Actual death is easier, she asserts, since it gives promise of eternally new life; but the death which the spirit chooses to undergo while still in this present life, this dying of our own free will, is far more costly, though well worth the price. In return for this death to self, God grants the soul so great a share in his love that it is ready to transcend all pain in giving herself to the work of leading others to God.

Once again, Teresa emphasizes the apostolic purpose of the contemplative life. God unites the soul to himself, not for her own pleasure or fulfillment, but for the joy and fulfillment of participation in his redemptive action towards all men.[1] The white butterfly, transcending her former mode of existence, is more deeply at peace than at any other time in her existence. Yet she is restless to "advance in the service of God and in self-knowledge."[2] Supremely conscious that the death of the "old man" was the sine qua non of her new life, the soul yearns to share her fuller, richer life with others. Her very desire imparts to others something of her own gift of God.

---

[1] For a full treatment of this inversion of the image of the divine indwelling, cf. Ch. VI, pp. 189-193, below.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, 7.

[3] Moradas, V, ii, 7-9.

Saint Teresa affirms that the touchstone of authenticity in the spiritual life is ever the same. Here in the higher stages of union with God "the Lord asks only two things of us: love for His Majesty and love for our neighbor."[3] To share perfectly in divine charity is to "get to know ourselves better and better," to realize perfect love of neighbor rooted in the love of God,[1] and to seek only his glory. The saint's concept of sharing in the glory of God is one "of being able in some way to help the crucified." Sharing in the redemptive life of Christ is the prelude to sharing in his glorified life.[2] Man's perfect receptivity to the Presence of God is the glory of God.

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iv. 12.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, 9; cf. V, iii, 1: "Siempre se entiende que ha de procurar ir adelante en el servicio de Nuestro Señor y en el conocimiento proprio; . . . tengo para mí que quiere Dios que no sea dada en balde una merced tan grande, sino que, ya que no se aproveche de ella para sí, aproveche a otros. Porque como queda con estos, deseso y virtudes dichas, el tiempo que dura en el bien, siempre hace provecho a otras almas y de su calor les pega calor..."

[3] Moradas, V, iii, 8: "La más cierta señal que--a mi parecer--hay de si guardamos estas dos cosas, es guardando bien la del amor del prójimo; porque si amamos a Dios no se puede saber (aunque hay indicios grandes para entender que le amamos), mas el amor del prójimo sí. Y estad ciertas que mientras más en éste os vierdes approvechadas, más lo estáis en el amor de Dios; porque es tan grande el que Su Majestad nos tiene, que en pago del que tenemos a el prójimo hará que crezca el que tenemos a Su Majestad por mil maneras; en esto no puedo dudar."

At the summit of mystical union, the "butterfly", too, dies; "and with the greatest joy because Christ now is its life."[3] Teresa equates this experience of completed transformation with Saint Paul's "He who is united to the Lord is one spirit with him."[4] Thus, she expresses the reality of the mystery of death to self and life in Christ as expereinced by the mystic. The Christ-life of the soul in full union with God is more than interior occupation with the Person, the teaching, the work of Christ. It goes beyond dependence, understanding, love. Having died the mystical death, the renewed human personality is 'married' to the Person of Christ by the power of the risen Lord. The Christ of glory inhabits the soul, not in a concrete, physical, moral or psychological manner, but as a spiritual reality. Mysteriously, the two are "one spirit," the living Spirit, the Pneuma of the glorified Christ is united in spiritual marriage with the human spirit.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, V, iii, 10. [2] Cf. Moradas, VII, iii, 4-7.

[3] Moradas, VII, ii, 5.

[4] 1 Cor. 6, 17; Moradas, VII, ii, 3-7 and iii, 1.

> It is impossible to say more than that, as far as one can understand, the soul (I mean the spirit of this soul) is made one with God, Who, being likewise a Spirit, has been pleased to reveal the love that He has for us by showing to certain persons the extent of that love, so that we may praise his greatness. For He has been pleased to unite Himself to His creature in such a way that they have become like two who cannot be separated from one another: even so He will not separate Himself from her.[2]

Teresa attempts only a simple description of the effects of this mystical union which defies all analysis. The mystical death has effected "a self-forgetfulness which is so complete that it really seems as though the soul no longer existed."[3] She is absolutely indifferent to all save the glory of God. Even her desire for suffering has changed from anxiety to deep interior joy and peace. There are no aridities or trials. The Lord himself is with the soul who is most certainly aware of the divine impulse from within:

---

[1] Cf. Romano Guardini. The Church of the Lord. (Chicago, 1966) pp. 47-52. The World and the Person. (Chicago, 1965) pp. 148-158.

[2] Moradas, VII, ii, 3: "No se puede decir más de que--a cuanto se puede entender--queda el alma, digo el espíritu de esta alma, hecho una cosa con Dios, que como es también espíritu, ha querido Su Majestad mostrar el amor que nos tiene, en dar a entender a algunas personas hasta adónde llega, para que alabemos su grandeza; porque de tal manera ha querido juntarse con la criatura, que ansí como los que ya no se pueden apartar, no se quiere apartar El de ella."

[3] Moradas, VII, iii, 2.

> When the soul is negligent, the Lord Himself awakens it. . . so that it sees quite clearly that this impulse proceeds from that interior of the soul. . . This is so usual and occurs so frequently that it has been observed with special care: just as the flame of a fire, however great, never travels downwards, but always upwards, so here it is evident that this interior movement proceeds from the center of the soul and awakens the faculties.[1]

Through a spiritual purification which parallels the process of detachment from, and appreciation of "the things of the world," the soul has reached a new phase of self-realization in Christ. At the very center of self is the divine principle of individuality and the source of psychic unity. Thus, Saint Teresa's images of transition merge with the primary symbols of the castle and the spiritual marriage. Light, purifying flame, transformed silkworm yield to the unifying symbol for the tranquility and silence of the divine action building the human spirit up to its full stature:

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iii, 8: "cuando se descuida, el mesmo Señor la despierta de la manera que queda dicho, que se ve clarísimamente que procede aquel impulso--u no sé como le llame--de lo interior del alma. . . Esto es tan ordinario y tantas veces, que se se ha mirado bien con advertencia, que ansí como un fuego grande no echa la llama hacia bajo, sino hacia arriba, por grande que quieran encender el fuego, ansí, se entiende acá que este movimiento interior procede del centro del alma y despierta las potencias." (For Saint Teresa's use of the terms "alma," "espíritu" and "potencias" cf. Ch. VI, p. below.

> So tranquilly and noiselessly does the Lord teach the soul in this state and do it good that I am reminded of the building of Solomon's temple, during which no noise could be heard; just so in this temple of God, in this Mansion of His, He and the soul alone have fruition of each other in deepest silence.[1]

At this point the saint can speak only in symbols or else speak not at all. For God now communicates with her directly. There is no connection between the rapturous enjoyment of God and the "sensible" devotions of the past. Pictures, sermons, music, etc., no longer have power to arouse the faculties. In fact, the faculties of understanding, memory, and imagination no longer inaugurate or influence the soul's experience. Her experience is of direct contact with the indwelling Spouse whose companionship destroys all need for even that solitude once deemed so necessary.[2]

The soul may be likened to a dove (the beloved of the Canticles),[3] to the unresisting straw magnetized by amber,[4] to the soft wax imprinted with the seal of God's action.[1] Such similes can become quite inadequate before the reality of "the most sovereign union of spirit with Spirit."[2] Yet under Teresa's pen the traditional images function very well, on the symbolic level, for expressing the interpenetration of the divine and the human; as, for example, in the case of the favorite symbol of patristic literature, the sealing wax.[3] The wax of itself is nothing of worth; yet its receptivity is necessary for the imprint of the seal which gives it value and significance. So it is that, except in so far as the soul has committed itself wholly to him, God does not act -- not even at the heights of mystical union where his favors "come quite independently of the acts of the soul itself."[4]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iii, 11: "Pasa con tanta quietad y tan sin ruido todo lo que el Señor aprovecha aquí a el alma y la enseña, que me parece es como en la edificación del templo de Salomón, adonde no se havía de oír ningún ruido; ansí en este templo de Dios, en esta morada suya, solo El y la alma se gozan con grandísimo silencio."

[2] Cf. Moradas, VII, iii, 12.

[3] Moradas, V, iii, 1; VI, ii, 1 and xi, i. Saint Teresa's emphasis in this symbol is on the peace of soul which is the certain effect of union with God.

[4] Efren de la Madre de Dios (Obras Completas, Vol. II, p. 437) gives Cervantes' (Don Quijote, 1. 23) as a reference for this image of the magnetized amber. But the Marín edition of the Quijote (Madrid,

Another symbol for the soul which carries the transition theme is the scriptural one of the tree "planted in the living waters of life."[5] The tree of life, symbolizing the immortal soul, indicates the inter-

---

1922, Vol. II, p. 257, l. 8) notes that Cervantes' figure alludes to the fragrant substance, ambar gris, a fixative used in the preparation of pelts to be made into clothing. Cf. Cervantes Novelas Ejemplares (Marin, Vol. I) p. 158, l. 8: "Se decía coleto, guantes o bolso de ambar, porque esta materia olorosa solía usarse para adobar las pieles de que se hacen tales prendas. La bolsilla del texto, de tan traída y vieja, apenas si conservaba algún olor."

[1] Moradas, V, ii, 12; cf. Ch. III, p. 57, above.

[2] Moradas, VII, iv, 10.

[3] Cf. Ch. III, p. 57, above.

[4] Moradas, VII, iii, 10.

[5] Ps. 1, 3.

penetration of the divine and the human. In primitive religious thought the tree stood for the axis mundi connecting earth and heaven.[1] In Christian thought this is precisely the role of man, in Christ: to sanctify all creatures and bring them to the transcendent God.[2] From the scriptural image wherein the tree symbol depicts fulfillment in Christ, Saint Teresa draws the essential notion of living in God through Christ. To "put on Christ" is to become the "tree planted in the living waters of life"--namely, in God. God is "the clear spring of life" from which flow the good works of man.[3]

> Any good thing we do has its source, not in ourselves but rather in that spring where this tree, which is the soul, is planted and in that sun which sheds its radiance on our works.[4]

And when the divine-human union is perfected--as much as it can be in this life--"How can we marvel at the desires of this soul since its spirit is verily made one with this celestial water of which we have been speaking?"[5]

The Symbol of Water

The celestial water, the saint assures us, is her favorite image for the God-soul relationship:

---

[1] Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, pp. 35-37.

[2] Rom, 8, 21.

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 1-5; cf. Pss. 1, 3; 11, 30; 13, 12; Apoc. 22, 2.

[4] Moradas, I, ii, 5.

[5] Moradas, VII, ii, 9.

> There are certain spiritual things which I can find no way of explaining more aptly than by this element of water. . . . As I am so fond of this element, I have observed it more attentively than anything else. . .[1]

Water like the other creatures which Saint Teresa uses as her symbols, constitutes more than a stylized figure useful for her purposes in explaining to others the joys of the spiritual life. In itself it effects a certain joy. The beauty and wonder of God's creation makes of nature itself a symbol of his omnipotence and omnipresence. Nature has its own relationship to man and to God. It speaks to man of God; it imitates God's beauty and goodness; shows forth his grandeur, his power, and wisdom.[2] All created things call attention to the providence of God and to their finality in him--reminding the human spirit of its own dependence upon and union with God, recalling humanity to its role as the incarnation of the presence of God in his world.

In water, more than in any other natural symbol, Teresa found an expression of the profundity of divine love. In the limpid beauty of water, in its life-giving power she grasped something of God's pervasiveness and activity within the human soul. Nothing illustrates her feeling for this element so much as her description of the happiness in the secret depths of the soul which enjoys the consolations of the prayer of quiet. It is as though God dwelling in the center of the soul is the source of a secret spring welling up and filling the depths of the human spirit with "the greatest peace and quietness and sweetness within."[1] For Teresa the psalmist's Dilatasi cor meum was stimulated by this welling up of "heavenly water" from deep springs at the center of the soul:

---

[1] Moradas, IV, ii, 2: "Que no me hallo cosa más a propósito para declarar algunas de espíritu que esto de agua; . . . y soy tan amiga de este elemento, que le he mirado con más advertencia que otras cosas."

[2] Cf. Moradas, VI, vii, 10: "Preguntemos a las criaturas quién las hizo--como dice San Agustín. . . "

> Returning to this verse, what it says about the enlargement of the heart may, I think, be of some help to us. For apparently, as this heavenly water begins to flow from this source of which I am speaking--that is, from our very depths--it proceeds to spread within us and cause an interior dilation and produce ineffable blessings, so that the soul itself cannot understand all that it receives there.[2]

No complete study of Saint Teresa omits reference to her predilection for the water symbol. Most of her commentators,[3] however, limit their consideration of the symbol in the Interior Castle to the analogy of the two fountains (in the Fourth Mansions) which presents the contrast between acquired and infused contemplation.

---

[1] Moradas, IV, ii, 4.

[2] Moradas, IV, ii, 6: "Tornando a el verso, en lo que puede aprovechar--a mi parecer--para aquí, es en aquel ensanchamiento; que ansí parece que, como comienza a producir aquella agua celestial de este manantial que digo, de lo profundo de nosotros, parece que se va dilatando y ensanchando todo nuestro interior y produciendo unos bienes que no se puede decir, no aun el alma sabe entender qué es lo que se le da allí."

[3] Cf., for example, P. Marie-Eugene, I Am a Daughter of the Church, pp. 10-20; Trueman Dicken, The Crucible of Love, pp. 178-187.

In the former, the soul by its own efforts (under grace) fills the fountain's basin; in the latter, "the water comes directly from its source, which is God."[1] Actually, Teresa's use of water as a symbol extends beyond this contrast, beyond the consideration of prayer as such.

As will be noted,[2] prayer, in the writings of Saint Teresa, embraces the spiritual life in its entirety. The seven mansions of prayer are indications of seven (among an even greater variety of) stages of the spiritual life. Prayer is the doorway to the castle of the spirit; the various "stages" of prayer mark the progress of the soul's itinerary within the castle and the steps toward the celebration of the divine-human nuptials. Saint Teresa equates the life of prayer with life in God. Hence water is her symbol for the entire life of the spirit. She uses it to parallel Saint Paul's description of the experience of union with God at the heights of which "he cannot even himself be sure if the soul is in the body or not." During such transports of spirit (i. e., in the Sixth Mansions) the fountain basin becomes a veritable ocean bearing the soul on its waves:

> But now this great God who controls the sources of the waters and forbids the sea to move beyond its bounds, has loosed the sources whence water has been coming into this basin; and with tremendous force there rises up so powerful a wave that this little ship--our soul--is lifted up on high. And if a ship can do nothing, and

---

[1] *Moradas*, IV, ii, 4.

[2] Cf. Ch. VI, p.146, below.

> neither the pilot nor any of the crew has any power over it, when the waves make a furious assault upon it and toss it about at their will, even less able is the interior part of the soul to stop where it likes, while its senses and faculties can do no more than has been commanded them: the exterior senses, however, are quite unaffected by this.[1]

The foregoing description of rapturous union illustrates the force of Teresa's imagery for analyzing the psychological effects of supernatural contemplation. In the presence of the supernatural--of God himself, the gifts of the Spirit, the virtue of Faith--no direct intellectual perception of activity is possible. Hence the saint must limit herself to discerning the effects of the supernatural in the psychological domain.[2] To this purpose water again serves as the apt image. Not so immaterial as light (her symbol for intellectual perception) yet more subtle and supple than other nature symbols, water symbolizes psychological awareness of the interior presence and action of God--action that absorbs the higher faculties, but leaves the exterior faculties quite unaffected:

---

[1] Moradas, VI, v, 3: "Aquí desató este gran Dios, que detiene los manantiales de las aguas y no deja salir la mar de sus términos, los manantiales por donde venía a este pilar de el agua, y con un ímpetu grande se levanta una ola tan poderoso que sube a lo alto esta navecica de nuestra alma. Y así como no puede una nave, ni es poderoso el piloto, ni todos los que la goviernan, para que las olas, si vienen con furia, la dejen estar adonde quieren, muy menos puede lo interior del alma detenerse en donde quiere, ni hacer que sus sentidos ni potencias hagan más de lo que les tienen mandado, que lo esterior no se hace aquí caso de ello."

[2] Cf. Moradas, IV, iii, 7-8.

XUM

> It is clear that a dilation or enlargement of the soul takes place, as if the water proceeding from the spring had no means of running away, but the fountain had a device ensuring that, the more freely the water flowed, the larger became the basin. . . . So this gentle movement and this interior dilation cause the soul to be less constrained in matters relating to the service of God than it was before and give it much more freedom.[1]

The supernatural interventions of God are manifested most clearly not by knowledge, but by the experience of their effects. There is no danger of a subjective or imaginative inducement of this experience, since the symbolic waters' source is a new depth of the psyche untouched by the understanding and imagination.[2] The higher the saint's experience of the supernatural, the more conscious she becomes of her humanity. "She seems to have found herself."[3] And with this consciousness comes a new appreciation of the depths of creaturehood.

---

[1] Moradas, IV, iii, 9: "Ansí como se entiende claro un dilatamiento u ensanchamiento en el alma, a manera de como si el agua que mana de una fuente no tuviese corriente, sino que la mesma fuente estuviese labrada de una cosa que mientras más agua manase más grande se hiciese el edificio. . . . Ansí esta suavidad y ensanchamiento interior, se ve en el que le queda para no estar tan atada como antes en las cosas del servicio de Dios, sino con mucha más anchura. . ."

[2] Moradas, VI, vii, 4-7; cf. William Johnston, SJ. "Defining Mysticism: Suggestions from the Christian Encounter with Zen," Theological Studies, XXVIII (1967), p. 109; also Marcel Lépée, Sainte Thérèse, Mystique, pp. 141-142.

[3] Moradas, VI, vi, 10.

> It is as if a mighty river were running through the soul and from time to time bringing these favors with it. But its sins are like the river's slimy bed; they are always fresh in its memory and this is a heavy cross to it.[1]

It is only when the spirit is made one with God in the consummation of the mystical marriage that God and his creature "become like two who cannot be separated from one another."[2]

> Here it is like rain falling from the heavens into a river or a spring; there is nothing but water there and it is impossible to divide or separate the water belonging to the river from that which fell from the heavens. Or it is as if a tiny streamlet enters the sea, from which it will find no way of separating itself. . .[3]

Again the symbol of water aids Teresa in presenting the phenomena of divine-human union. The experience is one of complete absorption in the Other, admitting of no separation, and yet, intensifying the personal identity of the soul united to God. The human personality becomes Someone else, yet remains fully itself. It is aware of a new principle of activity, the Uncreated Spirit giving life to its life.[1] The Lord's words alone describe human experience of divine union: "And the glory that thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and you in me!"[2]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vii, 2: "Parece que las lleva un río caudaloso y las tray a sus tiempos; esto de los pecados está como un cieno, que siempre parece se avivan en la memoria, y es harto gran cruz."

[2] Moradas, VII, ii, 3.

[3] Moradas, VII, ii, 4: "Acá es como si cayendo agua del cielo en un río u fuente, adonde queda hecho todo agua, que no podrán ya dividir ni apartar cuál es el agua del río u lo que cayó del cielo; o como si un arroíco pequeño entre en la mar, no havrá remedio de apartarse; . . . ."

These words, the saint asserts, have become effective. The soul fully and clearly realizes their truth; for there is all the difference in the world between "hearing" and "believing" the Lord's words. Teresa appreciates the full sacramental power of Sacred Scripture: God's word is effective in the soul in whom Christ dwells. "The words of the Lord are like acts wrought in us."[3] So it is that the living water of which he spoke to the Samaritan woman[4] now quenches the spirit's thirst. His spirit is the Spirit of life, "a fountain of water springing up to life eternal."[5]

Teresa translates the mystic's non-symbolic, immediate intuition of God into forms that are at once practical and imaginative, traditional and personal. Symbols of light, symbols of transition, and the water symbol delineate the consciousness of Christ as the life principle of those who give themselves to him.[6] Light, the primitive and classical symbol of spiritual strength and illumination, symbolizes the divine energy and illumination by which human existence realizes its full actuality in God.[1] God is the Sun, tradition's symbol for the source of the inborn fire of man, of man's glory and of his becoming a being of heroic proportions.[2]

---

[1] Cf. Moradas, VII, ii, 6-7.

[2] Jn. 17, 2-=21; cf. Moradas, VII, vi, 7.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Jn. 4, 5-14.

[5] Jn. 4, 11 and 7, 38-39.

[6] I Cor. 6, 17.

God is both the mirror of self-knowledge and the radiance by which the soul looks upon its own beauty created in his image.[3] God's power is a fire within the human spirit. Fire is the symbol for the agent of transformation and regeneration, of purification and transmutation.[4] God releases the human spirit from its bondage to self by making Himself the content of its existence.[5] His is the power whereby the soul gains a new center and form of existence, which is more really its own than the former one. It is not, Teresa affirms, merely the soul's appropriation of this new content and center in thought and in love. In reality, Christ who is "spirit" and Lord of all existence enters into the human spirit.[6] As Romano Guardini has expressed it:

---

[1] Cf. Moradas, VI, ii, 8.

[2] Cf. Eliade, Sacred and Profane, p. 157; also Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence, Vol. I, p. 68.

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 14.

[4] Van der Leeuw, loc. cit., pp.60-64.

[5] Moradas, VI, v, 9.

[6] Moradas, VII, ii, 4; cf. Guardini, World and Person, p. 150

"The human whole, soul and body, spirit and matter, become the material in which a new kind of being expresses itself."[1]

This is true freedom: self-knowledge and self-realization achieved through participation in the light and fire of God's holiness.[2] The liberated soul transcends its own being and becomes its better self by a supernatural metamorphosis which can be likened to those which take place in nature, for example, in the myth of the phoenix and the phenomenon of the silkworm's life cycle. This is rebirth, a dying to the old form of life and rising to the new.

Into the transformed soul flow the living waters of grace whose fountainhead is God Alone, be the waters laboriously drawn as through conduits, or spontaneously sprung from their source.[3] Water is the universal symbol for the power of life and of intuitive wisdom.[4] With fire it forms a complementary symbolism: source of life and death, of energy and destruction, of powerful motion and mystifying stillness. Both water and fire are symbols of consecration, of love.[5]

All the symbols converge on the notion of man's becoming his full self in Christ, the Light, the Fountainhead, whose Spirit empowers the inner transformation of the soul-castle in which he dwells as Spouse. Man, made in the image of God, is ever in the process of becoming more and more godlike in the pattern of Christ, the perfect Image; in the power of Christ, the Word-made- Flesh; in the Spirit of Christ who sanctifies. The Teresian symbols of light, of water, and of transformed creaturehood move toward the expression of the ineffable: human freedom and human love made perfect in personal union with Divinity; humanity making visible and effective on earth the Presence of God.

---

[1] Ibid., p. 144.

[2] Moradas, VI, x, 5-8; VII, iii; cf. Vida, VIII, 2; XXX, 12; XXXII, 2; etc.

[3] Moradas, IV, iii, 8.

[4] Cf. Eliade, Sacred and Profane, pp. 129-138.

[5] Cf. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence, Vol. I, p. 67.

CHAPTER VI

TERESIAN SPIRITUALITY AS EMBODIED IN THE CHIEF SYMBOLS

The thought of Saint Teresa of Avila has its roots in the fundamental theology of human existence: the human creature is made in the image of God[1] as the dwelling-place for his divine presence.[2] Underlying all the saint's writing is this biblical notion of the nature and destiny of man. It is a presupposition in Teresa's spirituality, based on her inheritance of Christian doctrine and her experience of union with the divine; but the saint does not take this truth for granted; rather, she never ceases to wonder at the beauty and the privilege of human creaturehood, perfected in its unity with divinity.[3]

---

[1] Moradas, I, i, 1; VII, i, 1.

[2] Ibid., also VII, iii, 5; cf. Rodolphe Hoornaert, St. Teresa in Her Writings, trans. Joseph Leonard (New York, 1931), p. 201.

[3] Moradas, I, i, 1: "No hallo yo cosa con que comparar la gran hermosura de un alma y la gran capacidad, y verdaderamente apenas deven llegar nuestros entendimientos--por agudos que fuesen--a comprenderla, ansí como no pueden llegar a considerar a Dios, pues El mesmo dice que nos crió a su imagen y semejanza. Pues si esto es como lo es, no hay para que nos cansar en querer comprender la hermosura de este castillo; porque que hay la differencia de él a Dios que del Criador a la criatura, pues es criatura, basta decir Su Majestad que es hecha a su imagen para que apenas podemos entender la gran dignidad y hermosura del ánima." Cf. VII, i, 1.

Teresa's symbolic expression of the mystery of humanity's unity with divinity is one of her distinctive contributions to spiritual theology. We have seen that her two main symbols, the castle and the spouse, constitute a single expression of the divine indwelling. The human soul is truly the dwelling of God who is in truth the Spouse of the soul. The two images of divine intimacy are as dependent upon each other as the symbols themselves are dependent upon their meaning. Just as the reality of the divine indwelling _is_ its own meaning, so Teresa's symbols merge reality with meaning.

When faced with the need to express the experience of divine-human union, Teresa was inspired[1] to choose an image sequence grounded in common human experience, made sacred in the Scriptures, steeped in Christian tradition and in her own Spanish culture. Yet there are also, in her choice of the castle and spouse symbols, distinctly personal elements--elements which reveal the loving heart and open mind of a truly great personality at one with the Person of Christ.

The fact that life itself is life in God,[2] that this participation in divinity remains mysterious even as it is lived, but that it is lived, experienced freely, uniquely, personally by each one called individually by God[3]--this is the sublime and simple message that Teresa embodies in the image of "the castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms . . . and in the center and midst of them all is the chiefest mansion where the most secret things pass between God and the soul."[1]

---

[1] _Moradas_, I, i, 1.

[2] _Moradas_, I, i, 1.

[3] _Moradas_, VII, i, 5.

Having explored the historical, theological and psychological implications of Teresa's symbolism, we turn now to a deeper consideration of the two dimensions of her symbolism: 1) the structure of personal existence as delineated by means of the seven-mansioned castle and 2) the fulfillment of human personality as realized in the spiritual marriage.

Every person "is an interior world wherein there are many and beauteous mansions."[2] The symbol embraces all that is noble, strong, and enduring in human nature, all that constitutes the "divinized" creature. The castle is "of a single diamond," pierced by the beauty of the divine light shining in its depths. This is no concept of God obtained by reflection on external reality or by analysis of inner experience; this is the act of standing in the burning and luminous presence of God. Guardini has expressed it well:

---

[1] Moradas, I, i, 1-3: ". . . un castillo todo de un diamente u muy claro cristal, adonde hay muchos aposentos. . . y en el centro y mitad de todos estas tiene la más principal, que es adonde pasan las cosas de mucho secreto entre Dios y el alma." In the Vida (XL, 10) Teresa reverses this image and speaks of God as the diamond in whom all creatures are reflected. Cf. pp. 189-193 for further comment on this reversal of the image.

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 5: " un mundo interior, adonde caben tantas y tan lindas moradas."

> If the elect of religious experience speak of inner "light," of inner "glow" they do not intend to use comparisons, but mean real beaming, real burning. . . . coming, of course, from another source than physical nature or psychic consciousness. It is an experience of the spirit; more exactly of the Holy Spirit, of the Pneuma. There takes place therein an elucidation in certitude, a seizure by glory, a clarification of life which place man on a new level of existence.[1]

With her figure of the translucent diamond Saint Teresa gives us an intuitive grasp of the simplicity and integrity of the human spirit graced by the presence of its Source and its Fulfillment. As we have observed, Teresa attempts no precise analysis of the psychology of the spiritual life. "There are so many and such subtle things in the interior life," she writes, "that it would be presumptuous for me to begin to expound them."[2] Yet her matter-of-fact references to the senses and faculties, to imagination, memory, and understanding reveal an intuitive grasp of the basic psychological realities.[3] So also do her fine distinctions between soul faculties, understanding and will, and between soul and spirit. Experience is her sole criterion:

---

[1] Romano Guardini, Pascal for Our Time (Trans. Brian Thomson; New York, 1966) p. 35.

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 11.

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 12; IV, iii, 2; V, iii, 5.

XUM

> It is possible to make observations concerning interior matters and in this way we know that there is some kind of difference, and a very definite one, between the soul and the spirit, although they are both one. So subtle is the division perceptible between them that sometimes the operation of the one seems as different from that of the other as are the respective joys that the Lord is pleased to give them. It seems to me, too, that the soul is a different thing from the faculties and that they are not all one and the same.[1]

Like many mystics, Teresa constantly speaks of "the essential part of the soul,"[2] the center, the inner depths of being where self-realization is effected through union with the Absolute. Experience taught her that the interior castle of the human personality can be illustrated by the palmito,[3] that is, that "layers" or "levels" of self-perception can be penetrated until the interiority of self-consciousness and of will are perceived--and this only in the light and warmth of relationship with the Absolute Personality:

> You must not imagine these mansions as arranged in a row, one behind another, but fix your attention on the centre, the room or palace occupied by the King. Think of the palmito, which has many outer rinds surrounding the savoury part within, all of which must

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 11: " . . . decía yo que se ven cosas interiores, de manera que cierto se entienda hay diferencia en alguna manera, y muy conocida, del alma a el espíritu, aunque más sea todo uno. Conócese una división tan delicada, que algunas veces, parece abra de diferente manera lo uno de lo otro, como el sabor que les quiere dar el Señor. También me parece que el alma es diferente cosa de las potencias, y que no es todo una cosa."

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 10.

[3] The fruit of an Andalusian shrub. Its edible part is a small kernel encased in layers of rind.

> be taken away before the centre can be eaten. Just so around this central room are many more, as there are also above it.[1]

The many mansions of the soul-castle are reminiscent of those of Saint John's Gospel.[2] The divine indwelling constitutes for man a veritable heaven on earth.[3] We are not to think of the mansions of the soul as formally structured stages in the spiritual life. Saint Teresa respects the infinite variety of human personalities and the unbounded potentialities of each individual. When she permits others to look into the mansions of her own interior castle and to know her intimacy with the divine Spouse, it is only that they may appreciate the mansions of their own dwelling with God.[4]

In her, existential Christian love can be seen in a concentrated form but also as an all-pervading phenomenon, shared to some extent by all humanity. The Carmelite mystic's chief symbols, the castle of the divine indwelling, and the Spouse of the divine union, represent every man's fundamental relationship with God. It is our task to bring to reflexive awareness the intuitions imbedded in these symbols.

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 8: "No havéis de entender estas moradas una en pos de otra como cosa enhilada, sino poned los ojos en el centro, que es la pieza u palacio a donde está el rey, y considerad como un palmito, que para llegar a lo que es de comer tiene muchas coverturas, que todo lo sabroso cercan. Ansí acá, en rededor de esta peiza están muchas y encima lo mesmo."

[2] Jn. 14, 2. When St. Teresa first introduces the symbol of the castle "in which there are many rooms," she adds, "Just as in Heaven there are many mansions." In later references to her symbol she returns to the concept of the soul as a "second heaven." Cf. VI, iv, 8; VII, i, 3.

[3] Moradas, V, i, 2.

[4] Moradas, I, i, 4; I, ii, 7.

Prayer

From the solid ground of self-knowledge[1] to the serene heights of knowledge of the Trinity,[2] Teresa leads us through the mansions of the soul-castle to the glory of the King who dwells there. "The door of entry into this castle of the soul is prayer."[3] Like all entrances, prayer--whether it opens upon the unknown or upon the familiar--leads to a personal encounter. At the divine invitation human initiative takes steps into the realm of self to begin the adventure of the interior life. From the doorway of prayer the soul will progress from mansion to mansion of the divine intimacy to the climax of union with the King-Spouse at the center of the castle.

The whole purpose of the soul's entering into itself is to encounter God. Teresa is not overlooking the necessity of entering into oneself for the purpose of acquiring self-knowledge.[4] "As I see it," she says, "we shall never succeed in knowing ourselves unless we seek to know God."[1] Seeking first to know Him ennobles self-awareness, whereas the direct pursuit of self-knowledge could tempt us to "fly low"[2], that is, become fearful of our own daring in aspiring to the heights of sanctity.[3] "We shall reach much greater heights of virtue by thinking upon the power of God than if we stay in our own little plot of ground and tie ourselves down to it completely."[4]

---

[1] _Moradas_, I, ii, 9

[2] _Moradas_, VII, i, 6.

[3] _Moradas_, I, i, 7; I, ii, 8.

[4] _Moradas_, I, ii, 8.

If prayer is the doorway to the castle, it also structures each of its mansions. Most of the commentators on Teresian spirituality consider the Interior Castle a treatise on prayer.[5] It is that and much more. Or better, it is that in the fullest sense of the term "prayer." Saint Teresa's seven mansions follow the stages of the development of prayer from its active to its contemplative forms, from discursive meditation to the prayer of the transforming union.[6] For Teresa, as for all authorities on the life of the spirit, prayer is the means of surrender to God and of union with Him; it is the very atmosphere in which this surrender and union are realized. In the "heaven" of Teresa's soul-castle the life of prayer is clearly the whole life of the spirit. The life of prayer is life itself. The individual's progress from mansion to mansion is a unique presentation of the special manifestation of Christ which constitutes the integral personality of each Christian. Paradoxically, a person is most himself when, having responded to the call of Christ within the depths of his being, he becomes most deeply immersed in Christ.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 9.

[2] St. Teresa uses the adjective "ratero" meaning something which drags itself along the ground spiritlessly. Cf. Efren de la Madre de Dios, Obras Completas, II, 350.

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 11.

[4] Moradas, I, ii, 8.

[5] Cf. Bibliography: Dicken, Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, Hoornaert, Père Marie-Eugene, CCD, Peers.

[6] Cf. Adolfo de La Madre de Dios, CCD, "Vista Panorámica de la vida espiritual según Santa Teresa," Revista de Espiritualidad (Abril-Diciembre, 1963), 595-600.

By means of her symbols Teresa gives expression to her own life of prayer and to her personal understanding of the interplay of divine action and human response. She herself, as she begins to speak of the higher froms of prayer, notes her refined perceptive and descriptive power: "I do not think I have ever explained this before as clearly as here."[2] It is, she says, as though the senses and faculties have absented themselves from the castle, have returned to the immediate vicinity and are gently called by the King to re-enter the castle.[3] The initiative is His; the Good Shepherd calls from within the castle. So gentle is this call that the person called retires within herself almost before realizing it, and only then becomes "markedly conscious" of the results of this special divine summons. God has called the soul--not without her own willing disposition[1]--to an absorption in Him which is in itself a displacement of discursive reasoning in prayer.

---

[1] Cf. Moradas, VII, iii, 9.

[2] Moradas, IV, iii, 3. Here the saint is referring to her description of recollection in the fourth mansions.

[3] Moradas, IV, iii, 3.

Saint Teresa admits her indebtedness to Francisco de Osuna (whose simile of the tortoise she borrows), and makes her own Saint Peter of Alcántara's theory that at this stage of prayer "love must be already awake." Yet she is humbly conscious of the fact that her own symbol comes closer to apprehending the mystery of this gift of prayer.[2] One of Teresa's practical contributions to the explication of the abstraction "prayer of recollection" is her insistence upon giving precedence to the divine initiative. The King calls the faculties within. Her image gives precise expression to the magnificent fact upon which all sanctity rests: It is not so much the human act of love which makes man whole and holy, as it is the act by which man is loved, the act of divine Love. "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loves us. . . .[3] Man's love is always a response to God's love. There is no question of the soul's taking the initiative and stilling the faculties' activity: "I cannot believe in the efficacy of human activity in matters where His Majesty appears to have set limits to it and to have been pleased to reserve action to Himself."[1]

---

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Moradas*, IV, iii, 3-4.

[3] 1 Jn., 4, 10.

Here Saint Teresa knowingly contradicts the theories of some of her contemporaries,[2] even of some interpreters of the treatise of Peter of Alcántara.[3] Teresa has her own logical reasons for denying the efficaciousness of human activity in this matter of stilling the faculties to make way for the gift of "absorption" in God: In all spiritual activity, the King must give the secret signs of His activity within the castle before one can herself strive to quiet the faculties. Interior activities must be "gentle and peaceful"; human initiative here would be destructive of such peace. To strive not to think is "to think a great deal"! And any such activity directed to the self is in complete opposition to the desired effect, namely, absorption in God.[4]

On the other hand, Saint Teresa would be the last to conclude that once the Shepherd-King has sounded his call, the soul should withhold its own activity, its response, and wait only on the good pleasure of His Majesty.[1] She would have us grasp the single truth that "the important thing is not to think much, but to love much."[2] Nor is our saint insensitive to the immediate difficulty of distractions. Her own painful experience had taught her to distinguish between "imaginative thought" and understanding. While the latter remains absorbed in God, the former can be wholly distracted: "Just as we cannot stop the movement of the heavens, revolving as they do with such speed, so we cannot restrain our thought." Yet we can well be wholly united with God "in the Mansions very near His presence, while thought remains on the outskirts of the castle, suffering the assaults of a thousand wild and venomous creatures. . . ."[3]

---

[1] Moradas, IV, iii, 5: "Yo no puedo persuadirme a industrias humanas en cosas que parece puso Su Majestad límite y las quiso dejar para Sí."

[2] Cf. Francisco de Osuna, The Third Spiritual Alphabet, Treatise VI, Ch. 4.

[3] Moradas, IV, iii, 4: ". . . de mí confieso mi poca humildad que nunca me han dado razón que yo me rinda a lo que dicen. Uno me alegó con cierto libro del santo Fray Pedro de Alcántara, que yo creo lo es, a quien yo me rindiera, porque sé que lo sabía; y dice lo mesmo que yo, aunque no por estas palabras."

[4] Ibid.

The Things of the World

Those who enter into themselves through the doorway of prayer leave the outer court of the castle "which is the place occupied by the guards."[4] Moving into the first mansions, they are accompanied by much of the impedimenta of life, "the things of the world . . . possessions or honors or business."[5] The first rooms of the castle are large and lightsome enough, but their light, emanating from the divine presence in the innermost mansions cannot be enjoyed since "wild beasts and animals, snakes, vipers, and poisonous creatures," the temptations of the world, are still very much present to the self. Few of the mansions of the castle are free from the struggle with evil.[1] But the "governors, butlers, and stewards," that is, the senses and soul faculties have strength to ward off the attacks of evil, if one is on guard, watchful, and trustful that, through the power of prayer, the Lord Himself will come to the assistance of the spirit, "make it free as regards inward things," and deliver it from evil.[2]

---

[1] *Moradas*, IV, i, 7.

[2] *Moradas*, IV, i, 8.

[3] *Moradas*, IV, i, 10.

[4] *Moradas*, I, i, 5.

[5] *Moradas*, I, ii, 14.

Before proceeding further, it will be well to examine, in the light of Teresa's symbols, her attitude toward external things, the "things of the world."[3] In the final analysis, the person united to God assumes through grace an attitude proceeding from God's view of men and things. But this ordering of human love and freedom is achieved only when the self is united to the Spouse in the center of the castle.

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 15. [2] Ibid.

[3] Moradas, II, 3. St. Teresa is using the biblical term "things of the world" in its theological sense. With her description of mystical experience she illustrates the paradox of being "in the world but not of it." (Jn. 15, 19). Progressively, the mystic shuns the dangers of the world (Mt. 16, 26; Mk. 8, 36; Lk. 9, 25; Col. 2, 20), detaches herself from the things of the world (Col. 2, 20; I Cor. 7, 31; Gal. 6, 14), in order to assess these things according to their worth for eternity (I Jn. 2, 15), sees the world as the object of redemptive love (2 Cor. 5, 19; Rom. 11, 15) and, finally, sees all things in God and God in them (I Cor. 3, 23; Col. 1, 16-17).

At the outset, the exterior world is a bond from which one ought to free himself. Everyone who wishes to enter the mansions of the interior world should "as far as his state of life permits, put aside all unnecessary affairs and business."[1]

Teresa goes so far as to say that unless we are willing to detach ourselves in the beginning from the things of the exterior world, we will never be able to enter the principal mansions of the interior world. This is the same logic of detachment to be found in the much misunderstood "nada" of Saint John of the Cross.[2]

As in the process of self-knowledge one must begin with detachment from self, so one who would correctly evaluate the things of the world must begin by withdrawing from them. The focus of attention for the truly "realized" personality is always God; others, the world, and self-awareness form the background for this focus. In the first mansions, therefore, efforts must be directed toward avoiding dangerous preoccupation with "worldly pastimes." Later, even in the second mansions, the human spirit becomes aware of the divine call in creatures themselves: "His appeals come through the conversations of good people, or from sermons, or through the reading of good books . . . through sickness and trials, or by means of truths which God teaches us at times when we are engaged in prayer . . . ."[1]

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 14.

[2] Saint John of the Cross, The Ascent of Mount Carmel, Bk. I, Ch. XII, trans. and ed. E. Alison Peers (3 vols. London: Burns and Oates, 1943), Vol. I, pp. 59-61. Cf. Crisógono de Jesús, CCD, Vida y Obras de San Juan de la Cruz (Cuarta Edición, Madrid, 1960), p. 396. "Las nadas . . . no son en la mente del Santo una finalidad, sino un medio, utilizable en los primeros momentos de la vida espiritual para evitar el peligro del afecto desordenado en el corazón aun imperfecto. Pero una vez realizada la purificación, desaparece la necesidad de esa actitud, porque el corazón limpio ya y ordenado, sacará bien de todo eso. Entonces no solo puede, sino que tiene que ararlo todo, surgiendo las predilecciones que imponen la diferencia de las personas y la naturaleza del corazón, que en los santos es más auténticamente humano y sensible que en los demás, por lo mismo que han desaparecido por la purificación las disfiguraciones pasionales, recuperdas y robustecidas sus energías efectivas."

At the same time that the soul is striving for detachment, it can be tempted by the allurements of this world, tempted to think that "earthly pleasures are almost eternal." Reason tells the soul that "all these earthly things are of the slightest value by comparison with what it is seeking."[2] The Good which it seeks is worth the sacrifice of all else; and seeking first the Kingdom of God assures the acquiring of all else besides. Nevertheless, it is a mistake to see in saintly detachment a lack of appreciation for creatures. The great lovers of God are also lovers of His handiwork because they see in all things a means of service and praise:

> In all things that have been created by so great and wise a God there must be many secrets by which we can profit, and those who understand them do profit by them, although I believe that

---

[1] II, 4.

[2] *Ibid.*

> in every little thing created by God there is more than we realize, even in so small a thing as a tiny ant.[1]

The things of this world, as necessary extensions of the self, become aids in the process of self-giving.[2] Thus the "snakes, reptiles, and poisonous creatures" which clamor in the outer court of the castle and can enter the lower mansions[3] are not to be equated with goods of this world but with the temptations which these constitute when they distract or waylay men in the pursuit of the final Good.

Souls in the third mansions "are familiar with the storms of the world, and realize how little need there is to fear them or to desire worldly pleasures."[4] Henceforth they assume a positive attitude toward the things of the world: "Worldly joys are in no way bad. To put it briefly, worldly joys have their source in our own nature and their end in God."[5] It is in this positive sense also that we must understand the expression borrowed from the old masters of the spiritual life, "contempt of the world," (despreció del mundo). The world is "despised" only in counter-distinction to the treasures of spiritual joy, much after the fashion in which (as the old masters also tell us) a child discards a toy when he can have instead the caresses of his mother.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, IV, ii, 2: ". . . que en todas las que crió tan gran Dios, tan sabio, deve haver hartos secretos de que nos podemos aprovechar, y ansí lo hacen los que lo entienden, aunque creo que en cada cosita que Dios crió hay más de lo que se entiende, aunque sea una hormiguita." Cf. Adolfo Munoz Alonso, "Concepto del mundo y de las cosas en Teresa de Jesús," Revista de Espiritualidad (Abril- Diciembre, 1963).

[2] Moradas, III, ii, 4-7.

[3] Moradas, I, i, 6 and 9; I, ii, 14; IV, i, 3, etc.

[4] Moradas, III, ii, 13.

[5] Moradas, IV, i, 5.

It is in the fourth mansions that the soul begins to touch the supernatural.[2] "It seems that in order to reach these mansions, one must have lived for a long time in the others."[3] Creatures must first have been "despised" in order to be truly evaluated. Once having seen the things of the natural order in their correct relationship to things of the supernatural order, the soul is prepared to recognize the former in all their goodness as visible images of the latter in all their mystery. Here in the fourth mansions, the castle literally becomes the temple of prayer.[4] The "great King" who dwells therein becomes "a good shepherd"[5] whose gentle call is so powerful that the soul is irresistibly drawn away from the things of the world and impelled to seek God within herself. This call of the divine shepherd is completely gratuitous, a special call inviting the soul to become intent on its life in God.

---

[1] Cf. St. Teresa, Vida, Cap. XXV, 21: ". . . que parecen las [cosas] de este mundo cosa de juego de niños. . ."

[2] Moradas, IV, i, 5. [3] Moradas, IV, i, 2.

[4] Moradas, IV, iii, 1.

[5] St. Teresa's interchanging of the divine titles "Shepherd" and "King," has a biblical basis. We do not claim that Teresa was explicitly conscious of this each time that she varied the titles of the royal shepherd, but only that, as is true of all her scriptural references, the word of God is so intimately hers that its imagery seems to be hers by nature.

In the fifth mansions the positive orientation to God is so strong that true union with Him most certainly has begun. "To some extent it is possible for us to enjoy heaven upon earth. . . . Here we are all asleep, and fast asleep, to the things of the world, and to ourselves. . ." In fact, one has completely died to the world so that she may live more fully in God.

> This is a delectable death, a snatching of the soul from all the activities which it can perform while it is in the body; a death full of delight, for, in order to come closer to God, the soul appears to have withdrawn so far from the body that I do not know if it has still life enough to be able to breathe.[1]

The important notion, then, in the concept of "contempt for the world" is the fact that the joys of the world are not merely exchanged for, but actually transcended by that joy which "is greater than all the joys of earth, and greater than all its delights and all its satisfactions. . . . The soul is no longer bound by ties of relationship, friendship, or property. . . . Everything wearies it, because it has proved that it can find no true rest in creatures."[2] This is a far cry from a mere negative attitude toward the pleasures of this world. It is a case of being transported beyond them until the soul feels itself to be " a stranger to the things of the earth."[1] Actually, the strong discontent caused by considering the emptiness of the things of earth "arouses a desire to leave it!"[2] Again, this is no negative contempt for the gift of life but the expression of a lover's desire to make the complete gift of self, or of an exile's longing to return to his true home.[3]

---

[1] Moradas, V, i, 3.

[2] Moradas, V, i, 1; V, ii, 9.

In the sixth mansions where earthly things are of no value any more, and great interior trials beset the soul, Teresa advises a concern for external affairs and works of charity.[4] Now the soul knows the secret things of God and has experienced how different they are from the things of earth.[5] In the light of the former she has a renewed appreciation of the latter. She has enjoyed the raptures and "the wounds" of divine love. Now she "would gladly have a thousand lives so as to use them all for God.[6] Subtly, the soul has come to a new realization of this life and its true purpose. She would like "everything on earth to be tongue" so that it might praise God.[7] She is fully and delightfully aware of the Master's lordship in her castle. This mastery, this union of her will with His, enhances all things.

---

[1] Moradas, V, ii, 10.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, 11.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Moradas, VI, i, 13.

[5] Moradas, VI, ii, 3.

[6] Moradas, VI, iv, 14.

[7] Ibid.

At this point Teresa insists (although she is aware that her opinion conflicts with that of many contemporary authorities) that the soul must remain grounded in what today would be called an "incarnational" approach to prayer.[1] This is in counter-distinction to an error in Quietism which Teresa seems to have recognized (far sooner than her contemporaries) as fundamental among the teachings of the Spanish Illuminati of her century. She is at great pains to free her spiritual daughters from the danger of such false spirituality: "The last thing we should do is to withdraw of set purpose from our greatest help and blessing, which is the most sacred Humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ."[2] According to Teresa the sacred humanity of Christ, the mystery of His passion, the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the example of His Mother and the saints must continue to be the subjects of contemplation, even when one has reached the rapture of the sixth mansions. Men are not angels, free of corporality. It is not possible for them to "remain permanently enkindled in love" while they live on this earth.[3]

> When the aforementioned fire is not kindled in the will, and the presence of God is not felt, we must needs seek it since it is His Majesty's desire, as the Bride sought it in the Songs. Let us ask the creatures who made them, as Saint Augustine says

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vii, 6-16

[2] Moradas, VI, vii, 7.

[3] Moradas, VI, vii, 7.

> that he did . . . and let us not be so foolish as to lose time by waiting to receive what has been given to us once already.[1]

We always need "to look at Christ our pattern."[2] And when love and faith are firm enough, as in the case of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the physical presence of the Incarnate God-Man, or in our case, His sacramental presence, are the most perfect aid to divine union.

Once again, Saint Teresa recalls her own experience. She tells us that having experienced mystical union through "a clear revelation of His Sacred Humanity" she thought she took less pleasure in thinking of Our Lord Jesus Christ,[3] and tried to go about in a state of complete absorption mistakenly thinking that she should be enjoying this special gift at all times. But soon she realized that a person can no more gaze at this mystical vision at all times than she could keep gazing at the sun.[4]

Not even the graces of the most sublime prayer eliminate the necessity for carnal things. Rather the experiences of the sixth and seventh mansions enrich and ennoble the function of material things. Matter itself becomes less and less opaque and more and more an instrument and an incarnation of spirit. God is still to be encountered in His works. It is the manner of the encounter that has changed. The method of prayer has become more exalted. God is apprehended not through the understanding, but by the will or by means of "simple regard."[1] But the human spirit will ever need and take delight in creatures--above all in its own being which is to be prized as a creature made in God's image. In the depths of her being the saint experiences the divine compansionship.[2] The soul-castle is literally the dwelling place of God. Never for a moment unaware of nor unappreciative of the Divine Presence in the innermost mansions of the interior castle, the soul finds its faculties now no longer "suspended"; rapture is quiet and intense; there is no further "division" of the fundamental "being" of the creature.[3]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vii, 9: "Ansí que, cuando no hay encendido el fuego que queda dicho, en la voluntad, ni se siente la presencia de Dios, es menester que la busquemos, que esto quiere Su Majestad --como lo hacía la Esposa en los Cantares--, y que preguntemos a las criaturas quién las hizo--como dice San Agustín. . . y no nos estemos bobos perdiendo tiempo por esperar lo que una vez se nos dió."

[2] VI, vii, 14. [3] VI, vii, 16. [4] VI, ix, 4.

Because the Divine Presence has become truly interior compansionship, because the soul is one with God in friendship, all creatures, too, have their specific role in the economy of life. Saint Teresa tells us that "however numerous were her trials and business worries, the essential part of her soul seemed never to move from that dwelling-place."[4] This does not mean that all things in life are somehow assumed

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vii, 12.

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 1.

[3] Moradas, VII, i, 8-11.

[4] Moradas, VII, i, 10.

XUM

to the Godhead, as in the pantheistic theories. The distinction between Creator and creature and among creatures, even the subtle distinctions of soul and spirit and faculties in the human creature are more clearly perceived in the light of divine intimacy.[1] But everything is called into a new coherence and raised to a higher plane of knowledge. The relation of the human person to the Person of Christ is seen to be the very life, oriented to God, of her who is called by him.

The purpose of the initial emptying of self and detachment from all that is creaturely has been achieved. The soul has come full circle. Self-denial has achieved self-giving, and God fills the soul with Himself.[2] In this new life in Christ all studied, negative attitudes toward "the things of the world" can be forgotten. In the first place, there is a complete self-forgetfulness. The soul is so entirely committed to the things of God that self-perfection, regard, honor, even life itself merit no consideration. His Majesty, reigning in her, has assured her "that she must take care of His business and He will take care of hers."[3] Teresa is quick to assure us that the soul so perfectly united with her God neglects no external works "made incumbent upon her by her profession. We are talking," she says, "of interior matters: as regards exterior ones there is little to be said." It goes without saying that no reason on earth can keep this soul from any and every service to her Lord.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 11. [2] Moradas, VII, iii, 2.

[3] Ibid., cf. VII, ii, 1.

Secondly, the former longing for death, the "desire to depart and to be with Christ,"[2] has been replaced by an overwhelming will to suffer and to serve:

> What surprises me most is this. You have already seen what trials and afflictions these souls have suffered because of their desire to die and thus to enjoy Our Lord. They have now an equally strong desire to serve Him, and to sing His praise, and to help some soul if they can.[3]

And yet these souls know a perfect detachment from everything, a desire to be always alone with God "or busy with something that is to some soul's advantage."[4] Exterior things no longer have any impulsive or motivating effect on the soul. God is the interior source of all the soul's activities.[5] Trials and crosses, never absent from this fulness of Christian life, cannot destroy the soul's peace. In fact, "His Majesty can do nothing greater for us than grant us a life which is an imitation of that lived by His beloved Son."[6]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iii, 3.

[2] Phil. 1, 23.

[3] Moradas, VII, iii, 4: "Lo que más me espanta de todo, es que ya havéis visto los trabajos y aflicciones que han tenido por morirse, por gozar de Nuestro Señor; ahora es tan grande el deseo que tienen de servirle y que por ellas sea alabado, y de aprovechar algún alma si pudiesen."

[4] Moradas, VII, iii, 8.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Moradas, VII iv, 4.

It is significant that at this sublime point, in the closing pages of her spiritual work, Saint Teresa returns to the basic consideration of the spiritual life in its relation to bodily or external life and to the apostolic dimension of contemplation. Her purpose, it seems, is to emphasize the doctrine of the integrity of life in God. The spiritual life is the life of the whole person in his total humanity, ordered and controlled by the divine Presence in the innermost mansion. In the other mansions this presence radiated through the self-surrendered soul faculties and out to "the folk outside the castle," the external senses, and thence to the service of this Lord, "bringing Him souls in every possible way." When a person has experienced the integrity of self and all things centered in God, then there is no question of a dichotomy between "natural" and "supernatural." The whole person, body-and-soul, together with all creatures, which are extensions of the self and the visible means of leading the soul to God, are seen from one perspective. All things emerge clearly in the light of the divine Presence at the center of the castle. Once the soul has learned how to take joy in this interior castle, she will find rest in everything.[1]

Personal Fulfillment in Christ

The freedom begotten of this proper relationship to the world and its goods is absolutely necessary for the full development of the

---

[1] Moradas, "Conclusion".

XUM

human personality.[1] Thus the object of Saint Teresa's description of a developing or progressive attitude toward the things of the world is a deeper appreciation of human personality. Her chief symbols describe the secret, internal process by which a person comes to know God--and thereby herself--within the divine image of her soul.[2] The Teresian castle goes beyond the level of a mere metaphor for the dwelling place of God. Not only is the castle the "place" of the divine indwelling, it is the very soul which, turning in on itself, encounters the divine Personality in the King-Spouse who inhabits it. The castle-Spouse imagery embodies an essential personalism--personalism in the modern sense of intense regard for the freedom and dignity of personal existence. Saint Teresa, like Saint Paul,[3] is speaking of the real indwelling of the glorified Christ in the Christian. She is describing more than an ecstatic condition, a temporary inhabitation or manifestation of the divinity within the human person.

There is a sense in which God inhabits every human soul. Not even the sinful personality is excluded from a certain participation in the divine presence.[4] Teresa's conviction of the divine presence in the soul (the dominant thought in her spirituality)[5] constitutes the permanent basis of personal existence. Though faith gives assurance of the human personality's participation in divinity, in practice this is often ignored. It is, Saint Teresa says, as though men concentrate on the outer wall of the castle and never enter it to enjoy there the spacious rooms, lovely gardens, and fountains.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 15.

[2] Moradas, I, i, 1.

[3] Gal. 3, 20.

[4] Moradas, I, ii, 1.

[5] Cf. Efren de la Madre de Dios, Obras Completas; Vol. II, p. 314. Marie-Eugene, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 17.

The God relationship creates the absolute meaning and dignity of the human personality, a fact subtly conveyed by the castle-Spouse symbol. Commenting on the inadequacy of her symbolism, Teresa observes that in reality nothing can be compared to the beauty and dignity of the human person.[2] Because the nature of the person lies ultimately in its relation to God in Christ,[3] this nature always remains shrouded in mystery. The notion of person is indefinable and ineffable. In fact, the prototype of what we call the human person is the absolute mystery of the Blessed Trinity.[4] Like all mystery, this fundamental human mystery lends itself to expression only by analogy to earthly realities. Through the symbols of the castle, the spouse and related symbols, Saint Teresa presents a mystical understanding of Personality in the Triune God as reflected in the mystery of human personality.

---

[1] Moradas, Cf. I i,21 and "Conclusion"; also R. Guardini, The World and the Person, p. 142.

[2] Moradas, I, i, 1; cf. note 3, p.139 above.

[3] Cf. Juan Alfaro, SJ. "Persona y gracia," Gregorianum, IV (1960), pp. 5-29.

[4] Cf. Guardini, The World and the Person, p. 156.

In this connection, Teresa's use of the names of God has special significance. Nothing so indicates her deepening appreciation of the personal relationship with God as does her variation of the titles of Christ: the Lord, the Shepherd, His Majesty the King, the Spouse, the Son. These are more than the expression of an ecstatic experience of Christ. They are names symbolic of a progressive relationship between Christ and the soul. The historical Christ, redeeming Shepherd, becomes Lord and Master of the soul which is responsive to divine love. His Majesty reigns in the soul with the effect of transforming the Christian personality into a continuation of his own Personality. The mystical life of the Spouse becomes the life of the soul.[1] The Son unites humanity with divinity.

As the mystery of Christ leads humanity to the mystery of the Trinity, so the soul's marriage to Christ leads to a mystical knowledge of the Blessed Trinity. "If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him."[2] The soul who is joined to Christ realizes the highest truth of faith in a manner which is somehow higher than "hearing and believing."[1] Teresa describes this revelation of the mystery of the indwelling Trinity:

---

[1] Cf. Guardini, The World and the Person, p. 144: "The 'pneumatic' (spiritual) Christ, who bears within him the whole fulness of reality and destiny of the historical Christ, forms the theme that is repeated in every believer, and not only the theme but also the power which carries it out, for its accomplishment is grace."

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 6: Jn. 14, 223.

> First of all the spirit becomes enkindled and is illumined, as it were, by a cloud of the greatest brightness. It sees these three Persons, individually, and yet, by a wonderful kind of knowledge which is given to it, the soul realizes that most certainly and truly all these three Persons are one Substance and one Power and one Knowledge and one God alone; so that what we hold by faith the soul may be said here to grasp by sight, although nothing is seen by the eyes, either of the body or of the soul, for it is imaginary vision. Here all three Persons communicate Themselves to the soul and speak to the soul. . .[2]

An Apostolic Spirituality

Even this experiential knowledge of the Trinity does not remove the veil of mystery. The too bright light of mystical experience penetrates mystery but does not pierce through it. Yet, a sure sense of the mystery of Divine Companionship never leaves the soul. "This, with the passage of time, becomes more evident through its effects:" complete self-forgetfulness, joy, tranquility, a great desire to suffer and

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 4.

[2] Moradas, VII, i, 6: "Primero viene a su espíritu a manera de una nube de grandísima claridad, y estas Personas distintas, y por una noticia admirable que se da a el alma, entiende con grandísima verdad ser todas tres Personas una sustancia y un poder y un saber y un solo Dios; de manera que lo que tenemos por fe, allí lo entiende el alma--podemos decir--por vista, aunque no es vista con los ojos del cuerpo ni del alma, porque no es visión imaginaria. Aquí se le comunican todas tres Personas, y la hablan, . . ."

XUM

to work for God and for the salvation of others.[1] This latter effect is for Saint Teresa the most important. The apostolate is the goal of contemplative life, "the aim of prayer: this is the purpose of the Spiritual Marriage, of which are born good works and good works alone."[2]

There is no question in the saint's mind but that the intense interior life of the contemplative is of great apostolic value. Never does she conceive of a separation between love and its activity, prayer and the apostolate, love of God and love of neighbor. "What the Lord desires is works,"[3] she says emphatically. "The Lord asks only two things of us: love for His Majesty and love for our neighbor."[4] The presence of God in the soul effects the "ordering" of this charity as mentioned in Canticles.[5] Once the Bride knows herself to be possessed by the divine Bridegroom "He gives her something of His own, which is what His Son had in this life." namely, that love of the Father which impels the laying down of one's life for others.[6]

The ever present natural tension between "resting in the Lord" and performing external works of charity presents a painful dilemma for the contemplative nun of the sixteenth century:

---

[1] Moradas, V , ii, 6.

[2] Moradas, VII, iv, 6.

[3] Moradas, V, iii, 12.

[4] Moradas, V, iii, 8.

[5] Cant. 2, 4; cf. Moradas, V, ii, 13.

[6] Moradas, V, ii, 14; cf. VI, vi, 4: ". . . y dar mil vivas porque un alma os alabe un poquito más a su causa. . ."

> God gives these souls the keenest desire not to displease Him in any respect whatsoever . . . For this reason alone, if for no other, the soul would like to flee from other people, and greatly envies those who live, or have lived, in deserts. On the other hand it would like to plunge right into the heart of the world, to see if by doing this it could help one soul to praise God more; a woman in this state will be distressed at being prevented from doing this by the obstacle of sex and very envious of those who are free to cry aloud and proclaim abroad Who is this great God of Hosts.[1]

Yet there is no real obstacle to performing the work of the Lord once the will is wholly united to His. Transformed by God's love, confirmed therein, one acts in his Spirit. Teresa suggests that a perfect act of love for the bride of Christ is Paul's exclamation: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"[2] The bride rejoices in sharing the redemptive life of the Spouse and in following him unto death, "for love, I believe, can never be content to stay for long where it is."[3]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vi, 3: "Da Dios a estas almas un deseo tan grandísimo de no le descontentar en cosa ninguna . . . que por sólo esto, aunque no fuese por más, querría huir de las gentes, y ha gran envidia a los que viven y han vivido en los desiertos. Por otra parte se querría meter en mitad del mundo, por ver si pudiese ser parte para que un alma alabase más a Dios; y si es mujer, se aflige del atamiento que le hace su natural, porque no puede hacer esto, y ha gran envidia a los que tienen libertad para dar voces, publicando quién es este gran Dios de las cavallerías."

[2] Acts, 9, 6.

[3] Moradas, VII, iv, 9: It is to be noted that Saint Teresa refers indiscriminately to Father, Son and Spirit as "His Majesty" --evidence of her experimental knowledge of the Mystery of the Trinity.

The Presence of God

The Teresian castle of the human personality consists of unnumbered moradas or dwelling places for Christ, the King and Spouse of the soul. Each "mansion" shows a different facet of the divine indwelling, and each calls for a progressively greater human response. The divine Presence permeates every mansion, like sunlight emanating from the center of the translucent castle, diamond-like in its many-faceted reflection of the divine Personality.

> In speaking of the soul we must always think of it as spacious, ample and lofty; and this can be done without the least exaggeration, for the soul's capacity is much greater than we can realize, and this Sun, which is in the palace, reaches every part of it. . . . Since God has given it such dignity, it must be allowed to roam through these mansions--through those above, those below and those on either side.[1]

Teresian scholarship has often called attention to the force of the word moradas.[2] In any language, the notion of dwelling carries connotations far deeper than that of mere residing in. The one who dwells in a home possesses it, takes delight in it. As Saint Teresa herself expresses it: "The soul of the righteous man is nothing but a paradise, in which, as God tells us, He takes His delight."[1]

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 8: " . . . porque las cosas del alma siempre se han de considerar con plenitud y anchura y grandeza, pues no le levantan nada, que capaz es de mucho más que podremos considerar, y a todas partes de ella se comunica este sol que está en este palacio . . . . Déjela andar por estas moradas arriba y abajo y a los lados, pues Dios la dió tan gran dignidad."

[2] Cf., for example, Efren de la Madre de Dios, Obras Completas, Vol. II, pp. 313-314; Helmut Hatzfeld, Santa Teresa de Avila (New York, 1968) pp. 42-45; William T. Walsh, Saint Teresa of Avila (Milwaukee, 1943), pp. 480-483.

Nor was Saint Teresa ignorant of all the nuances of the concepts "presence of God." Never claiming theological knowledge, she rejoices in the graces which led her to a full grasp of this theological truth.[2] On every level of knowledge, through conversations with her spiritual directors, through divine inspiration, through immediate experience of the divine indwelling, Teresa understood the presence of God: He is in all things by his presence, essence and power.[3] "The Lord wishes us . . . to remember that we are in His presence."[4] When the soul loses sight of this fact of his presence, she must seek it diligently. Greater by far than the knowledge of the divine presence in all other creatures is the reality of His presence within the human person.[5] Human beings possess God in knowledge and love. In the soul of the mystic this presence becomes so heightened that, indescribable as it is, its effects are unmistakable.[6] The soul walks with

---

[1] Moradas, I, i, 1. Saint Teresa refers to Prov. 8, 31; cf. Ch. III, p. 48, above.

[2] Cf. Vida, XVIII, Relaciones, LIV, and Moradas, V, i, 9.

[3] Moradas, V, i, 9.

[4] Moradas, IV, iii, 5.

[5] Moradas, VI, vii, 10.

[6] Moradas, VI, viii, 3-4.

God; it is all but overpowered by the "terrible brilliance" of his presence; indeed, the Lord must help it in its weakness so that it may be united with His greatness in sublime communion.[1]

The Degrees of Prayer

Prayer, as we have noted above, constitutes the express relationship between the divine and human personalities. It is the "doorway" of the divine-human encounter and the very structure of the mansions of the castle. Thus, the progressive stages of prayer mark the soul's progress through the mansions of the castle until it arrives at intimate union with the Lord of the castle in the central and innermost mansion. The saint's seven-fold division of the life of prayer parallels that of the classical treatises.[2]

Whether we refer with Saint Augustine[3] to the prayer of "the beginner, the proficient, and the perfect," or with the pseudo-Dionysius[4] to the "purgative, the illuminative and the unitive ways," we find a corresponding progression in the seven mansions of Saint Teresa. In fact, Teresa's seven-fold division of the soul's progress toward union with God has become, in its turn, the basis and norm for all who have come after her in the study of the science of mysticism.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, ix, 7.

[2] Cf. Marie-Eugene, op cit., outline of 2 vols.; Father Ermanno, ODC, "The Degrees of Teresian Prayer," Saint Teresa of Avila, (Thomas and Gabriel, eds.), pp. 77-103; Garrigou-Lagrange, Christian Perfection and Contemplation (Trans. Sr. M. Timothea Doyle, OP; St. Louis, 1946) p. 6; John G. Arintero, OP, Stages in Prayer (Trans. K. Pond ; St. Louis, 1957) pp. 54-58.

[3] De Quantitate Animae, Bk. I, ch. 33.

[4] Theologia Mystica, Ch. 1, no. 1.

Garrigou-Lagrange[2] notes the similarity of expression among mystical writers of all ages (from Saint Gregory the Great to Saint John of the Cross) and attributes Teresa's greater effectiveness in depicting the mystical experience to her stress on the particular rather than on the general. It would seem that the difference lies deeper than that. Arintero's comparison[3] of Teresa's classification of the degrees of prayer with that of writers both before and after her, highlights her greater simplicity and clarity. Again we would hold that Teresa's greater effectiveness, her simplicity and clarity are attributable to her preference for the symbolic rather than the conceptual expression.

Briefly, Saint Teresa's First, Second and Third Mansions do correspond to the stage of the beginner or to the purgative way, i.e., to the practice of the ascetical life. This is evident in her description in these three mansions of the need for active purification of the senses or for putting aside "the things of the world," in her stress on the necessity of the virtue of humility and on the soul's consciousness of its own activity--especially in the acts of love and the practice of patience in suffering.

---

[1] Cf. Arintero, Stages in Prayer, pp. 28-33, and Garrigou-Lagrange, Christian Perfection and Contemplation, pp. 5-7.

[2] loc. cit.

[3] loc. cit.

The Fourth Mansions correspond to the proficient stage or the illuminative way. This is the threshold of the mystical life where Saint Teresa depicts the passive purification of the senses and the initial stages of infused or supernatural prayer.

The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Mansions correspond to the state of the perfect or to the unitive way. Here the prayer of simple union progresses to that of complete union and thence to transforming union. The soul is dominated by the presence and activity of God. Human personality has "put on" Christ.

The Castle of the Soul

Teresa, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, is seldom nonplussed by variations, proliferations, or even inconsistencies in her imagery. But she takes pains at the outset to explain the phenomenon of the soul's being the castle as well as the viator through its own mansions:

> I seem rather to be talking nonsense; for if this castle is the soul, then there can clearly be no question of our entering it. For we ourselves are the castle: and it would be absurd to tell someone to enter a room when he is in it already! But you must understand that there are many ways of "being" in a place. . . . You will have

> read certain books on prayer which advise the soul to enter within itself: and that is exactly what this means.[1]

And so Teresa introduces her readers into their own life of prayer.

Entering, as it were, on the ground floor of the castle one finds oneself in the dimly lighted rooms of ordinary prayer.[2] The faulty light, of course, is wholly attributable to the distractions of the soul. "It is as if one were to enter a place flooded by sunlight with his eyes so full of dust that he could hardly open them. The room itself is light enough . . ."[3] Here human activity, as we have seen, is concentrated on self-knowledge, and the resultant prayer must be characterized by a great reliance on the mercy and power of God. This type of prayer lays the foundation of true personality fulfillment; the virtue of humility being this foundation. Humility is synonymous with self-knowledge.[4]

---

[1] Moradas, I, i, 5: "Parece que digo algún disbarate; porque si este castillo es el ánima, claro está que no hay para que entrar, pues se es él mesmo; como parecería desatino decir al uno que entrase en una pieza estando ya dentro. . . . Ya havéis oído en algunos libros de oración aconsejar a el alma que entre dentro de sí; pues esto mesmo es."

[2] Saint Teresa distinguishes between discursive prayer or meditation, and supernatural prayer or infused contemplation: "Most of the souls which dwell in the Mansions already described. . . labor with the understanding almost continuously, and make use of it in their meditations. They are right to do this because nothing more has been given them. . . . But when the Lord gives them this other grace /the prayer of quiet / let them be very careful not to reject it. . . ." IV, i, 7.

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 14.

[4] Moradas, I, ii, 13; VI, v, 10.

It is the basic virtue[1] which recognizes our creaturehood, our dependence upon the personal relationship between the finite and the Infinite:

> God is sovereign Truth and to be humble is to walk in truth, for it is absolutely true to say that we have no good thing in ourselves, but only misery and nothingness; and anyone who fails to understand this is walking in falsehood.
>
> We must walk in truth, in the presence of God and men in every way possible to us. In particular we must not desire to be reputed better than we are and in all we do we must attribute to God what is His, and to ourselves what is ours, and try to seek after truth in everything.[2]

Remarkably clear on each of the seven levels of the divine-human relationship is the natural integration of prayer and daily life, of inward and outward activity. The first mansions are darkened by the presence of temptations against love of neighbor.[3] Too much preoccupation with self-perfection can lead even the most well-intentioned soul to an "indiscreet zeal," for example, to hunting down the slight imperfections of others. Even in the half-light of the lowest mansions it is clear that personality grows from the roots of self-evaluation in the sunlight of divine perfection. And the object of this incipient growth is the perfection of charity.[1]

---

[1] Hence Saint Teresa alludes to this virtue in each of the Mansions: e.g., I, ii, 13; II, 8 etc. and complete references (p. 169 of copy).

[2] Moradas, VI, x, 6-7: "Dios es suma Verdad, y la humildad es andar en verdad; que lo es muy grande no tener cosa buena de nosotros, sino la miseria y ser nada, y quien esto no entiende, anda en mentira."

"Andemos en verdad delante de Dios y de las gentes, de cuantas maneras pudieremos, en especial no quiriendo nos tengan por mejores de lo que somos, y en nuestras obras dando a Dios lo que es suyo y a mosotras lo que es nuestro, y procurando sacar en todo la verdad."

[3] Moradas, I, ii, 17-18.

It is a psychological premise that self-evaluation is as much dependent on loving and being loved by others as it is on loving and being loved by God. In the closing paragraph of the First Mansions, Teresa assures her daughters that the one certain means of overcoming all the dangers and temptations of this mansion is mutual love.[2] No startling doctrine this; but one that has been underplayed by most evaluations of the contemplative life.[3] Teresa gives it special emphasis on every level of the soul's development. In effect, she emphasizes the perennial Christian doctrine: There is only one concrete, visible expression of a person's love of God, and that is love of neighbor. It is all one love. Love of God and love of neighbor are so closely interwoven that one serves as criterion for the other.[4] Love of God impels love of neighbor. Love of neighbor bespeaks perfect union with God.[5]

---

[1] Moradas, I, ii, 17.

[2] Moradas, I, ii, 18.

[3] Cf. pp.168-169, above.

[4] Moradas, V, iii, 9-10: Cf. 1 Jn. 4, 12 and 5, 2.

[5] Moradas, V, iii, 12-13.

In the second mansion the soul hears the call of the Lord of her castle and wills to draw nearer to his Presence even as her own weakness holds her back.[1] The figure is that of the person who can hear but is incapable of response.[2] This is the mansion of faith and perseverance, where spiritual favors are wanting, and one's own imperfections constitute grave suffering. Already there is the strong temptation to turn back in the search for self-conquest and union with the divine. It is the hour to trust, not in oneself but in the Lord and his passion-expression of love for humanity.[3] Meditation on the salvation mystery strengthens the will and the understanding so that the soul learns to appreciate the peace and security of "its own house" or castle.[4]

To acquire this peace the personality must know a harmony from which no reality is excluded. All experience, even the internal "warfare" of temptation, can lead the soul to recollection within itself,[5] to the pursuit of the divine image within the self. "It is absurd to think that we can enter Heaven without first entering our own souls."[6] For God is to be found there first. Here alone in this life the divine encounter will take place.

---

[1] Moradas, II, 3.

[2] Moradas, II, 2.

[3] Moradas, II, 3.

[4] Moradas, II, 5.

[5] Moradas, II, 10-11.

[6] Moradas, II, 12.

Readily we perceive the value of the castle symbol for a simple yet profound presentation of the complex totality of all the areas of human relationship. Saint Teresa's symbol replaces the philosophical abstraction which Monsignor Guardini refers to as the "sphere of existence."[1] This is the complexity of "inwardness," and "upwardness," the "sphere" in which man seeks God and finds himself. Thus it includes more than human experience and more than a dimension of depth awaiting development within each human being. It begins and ends with the gift of God. The Teresian castle is this "sphere of existence" where the human personality seeks and finds the progressive integration of body, soul, and spirit, the fulfillment of personality--life in God.

This is the function of Teresian meditation in the Third Mansions: to reflect on and to reflect the Infinite. It is still far from the culmination of personal union with God. Teresa seems to present the Third Mansions as a plateau whence human action can take us (never, to be sure, independent of divine assistance), and where divine action takes over. Here God makes the soul painfully aware of its own inadequacy, only to have her rely more readily on his strength. "Test us, O Lord," the saint prays, "thou who knowest all truth, that we may know ourselves."[2] The test is by way of periods of aridity in prayer, but these alternate with periods of "spiritual sweetness." It is the latter which, as we have mentioned, Teresa defines in the following mansions as "joys which have their source in our own nature and end in God."[1]

---

[1] The World and the Person, pp. 35-41.

[2] Moradas, III, i, 10.

It is evident that each mansion of the castle, characterized by different spiritual phenomena, admits of its own special relationship with Christ. One is conscious at all times that the castle represents enfleshed spirit straining toward a relationship with the divine Personality within its own depths. Hopefully, there are many souls who arrive at the Fourth Mansions, that is, who begin the life of supernatural contemplation.[2] Here the will is united "in some way" with the will of God. Not through human effort, or merit, but out of the divine largesse itself, the human soul enters upon the way of supernatural prayer.

It is here that Saint Teresa employs the water symbol which we described in the preceding chapter. She is intent upon distinguishing the two types of prayer characteristic of the Fourth Mansions; the prayer of recollection,[3] and the prayer of quiet.[4] The former, she says, seems to build the temple[5] for the latter. "It is sometimes said that the soul enters within itself and sometimes that it rises above itself; but I cannot explain things in that kind of language, for I have no skill in it."[1] Her kind of language is the symbolism of the soul castle whose senses and faculties (its inhabitants) "have been consorting with strangers" until the King calls them within the castle. "His call to them is a special one and aims at making them intent upon interior things."[2]

---

[1] Moradas, IV, i, 5.

[2] Moradas, IV, iii, 14.

[3] Moradas, IV, iii, 1.

[4] Moradas, IV, ii, 2.

[5] Cf. Ch. III, p. 49, above.

Here in the Fourth Mansions, Saint Teresa has combined succinctly her teaching on active and passive recollection.[3] It is to be observed that the saint, like a true master of the spiritual life, avoids any strict systematization of prayer. Prayer must be free--free for the action of God and for the response of the soul--or it is not prayer at all. The mansions of the Teresian castle are open to the wandering of the spirit under the operation of the Spirit. "There is nothing more normal than the to-and-fro movement of a soul established habitually in one Mansion, going back at times, or again rising to higher Mansions."[4]

Authorities on the Teresian works do not all agree on the distinction of the two types of prayer in the Fourth Mansions. Obviously, the saint is speaking of two distinct stages of prayer,[1] but some authorities[2] identify the prayer of supernatural recollection with the prayer of union (of the Fifth Mansions), while others[3] consider it a perfect form of the prayer of quiet. Some of the confusion is due to the fact that Teresa's divisions of the degrees of prayer do not correspond exactly in the *Life*, the *Way of Perfection*, and in the *Interior Castle.* As Father Ermanno, OCD, indicates, her own spiritual maturity at the time of writing the *Interior Castle* simplified and intensified her appreciation of the qualities of the reciprocal love between God and the soul, so that she gives a more comprehensive classification here than in the other two works.[4]

---

[1] Moradas, IV, iii, 2.

[2] Moradas, IV, iii, 2.

[3] Cf. Vida, XI-XIII.

[4] P. Marie-Eugene, OCD, Vol. I, p. 486. Cf. also I, ii, 8: "It is very important that no soul which practices prayer, whether little or very much, should be subjected to undue constraint or limitation."

Teresa herself is conscious of some discrepancy between this work and the earlier ones, precisely when speaking of the prayer of quiet:

---

[1] *Moradas*, IV, iii, 1. cf. Marcel Lépée, *Le Realisme Chrétien chez Sainte Thérèse d'Avile* (Paris, 1947) pp. 339-340.

[2] Cf. Lépée, *ibid.*; Ermanno, "The Degrees of Teresian Prayer," p. 82; Venanzio dello Spiritu Santo, "Oración y virtudes según Santa Teresa de Jesús," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* 18 (1959) 490.

[3] e.g. Adolphe Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life,* Trans. Herman Branderis (Boston, 1930), pp. 675-676; Joseph de Guibert, *The Theology of the Spiritual Life*, Trans. Paul Barrett, (New York, 1953) p. 316; Gabrielle di Santa Maria Maddalena, *La via dell'orazione* (Rome, 1955), p. 157.

[4] *Moradas*, IV, ii, 7: cf. Ermanno, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

> It may be that in writing of these interior things I am contradicting what I have myself said elsewhere. This is not surprising, for almost fifteen years have passed since then, and perhaps the Lord has now given me a clearer realization of these matters than I had at first.[1]

From the point of view of imagery it would seem that this second type of prayer in the Fourth Mansions is supernatural recollection or the prayer of quiet. "It is not a question of our will--it happens only when God is pleased to grant us this favor."[2] He calls souls to this mansion. They are within it almost before they realize it. "I cannot say where they entered or how they heard the Shepherd's call."[3] A dilation or enlargement of the soul takes place (The saint quotes the dilatasti cor meum of Ps. 118)[4], causing great freedom in the service of God.[5] While this delight in the presence of God is the primary effect of the prayer of quiet, there are also the painful effects which Saint John of the Cross has described as passive purifications of the senses.[6] Teresa mentions frequently, in the Fourth Mansions, the soul's aridity and the great danger of temptation. Yet, perfect quiet of the will can persist even while coinciding with aridity and great anxiety of soul.[1]

---

[1] Moradas, IV, ii, 7: "Podrá ser que en estas cosas interiores me contradiga algo de lo que tengo dicho en otras partes; no es maravilla, porque en casi quince años que ha que lo escriví, quizá me ha dado el Señor más claridad en estas cosas de lo que entonces entendía."

[2] Moradas, IV, iii, 3.: cf. Vida XIV-XXV, and Camino de Perfeccion XXXI-XXXIII.

[3] Moradas, IV, iii, 3. [4] Moradas, IV,ii,5. [5] Moradas, IV,iii, 9.

[6] Cf. The Dark Night of the Soul, LX, Vol. I, p. 375.

The Spouse of the Soul

When for the first time in the Interior Castle the saint alludes to the bride of the Canticles it is in connection with these "interior battles" with the weaknesses of human nature. In the face of them, she says, "let us desire to go where no one will despise us."[2] Her reference is to Canticles 8, 1. where the bride yearns for the kiss of her beloved under circumstances which call for no menosprecios (scorn of contempt), that is, in Teresa's imagery, no taunts from weak human nature. As we have seen, Teresa has adopted the classical symbol of the spouse of the Canticles in an effort to express the ineffable experience of mystical union. She laments her inability to present a clear concept of the prayer of union:

> I think it would be better if I were to say nothing of the Mansions I have not yet treated, for no one can describe them, the understanding is unable to com-

---

[1] Cf. Alvis Mager, "Le Fondement psychologique de la purification passive," Etudes Carmelitaines 23 (1938) II, 240-253: Mager makes a distinction between anima or the soul acting through the body and spiritus or Bonaventure's superior ratio. In contemplative prayer, he says, God communicates with spiritus. Infused prayer is a divine touch in the substance of the soul. The anima, being unaware of this higher operation, suffers aridity and anxiety.

[2] Moradas, IV, i, 13.

> prehend them and no comparisons will avail to explain them, for earthly things are quite insufficient for this purpose.[1]

So great a secret is God's close contact with the essence of the soul that he "will not even entrust our thoughts with it."[2] Thus, the only symbols for this most intimate union are those which Sacred Scripture and mystical writings have borrowed from human love's most perfect expression, the marriage union. Teresa's writings on the prayer of union abound in the use of these symbols.[3] In the Interior Castle the wedding allegory becomes the exclusive expression of the final stages of union with God.

In the Fifth Mansions the saint pauses to define the deeply spiritual meaning of her symbol:

> I am only making a rough comparison, but I can find no other which will better explain what I am trying to say than the Sacrament of Matrimony. The two things work differently, for in this matter which we are treating there is nothing that is not spiritual: corporeal union is quite another thing and the spiritual joys and consolations given by the Lord are a thousand leagues removed

---

[1] Moradas, V, i, 1: "Creo fuera mejor no decir nada de las que faltan, pues no se ha de saber decir ni el entendimiento lo sabe entender, ni las comparaciones pueden servir de declararlo, porque son muy bajas las cosas de la tierra para este fin."

[2] Moradas, V, i, 4.

[3] Cf. Relaciones, XXXV, XXXVIII; Vida, XXXVI; Camino, II, VII, VIII, XII, XXXIV, etc.

> from those experienced in marriage. It is all
> a union of love with love, . . . [1]

As in marriage the love of the husband and wife progresses from external, sensible attraction and expression, through the more noble spiritual exchanges to the infinitely deeper, more integral union of body, mind, will, and spirit, so in the spiritual marriage God's sensible consolations, leading to interior delights, give place to the complete gift of self.[2] Paralleling these three levels of human love and divine-human love are Teresa's images: the "encounters," the "betrothal," and the "marriage." With this symbolism the saint presents the forms of the prayer of union termed by the masters of the spiritual life: simple union, intense union, and transforming union.[3]

With true feminine insight Teresa presents the age-old marriage metaphor with personalized nuances. Not only had she experienced the subtle differences among the three stages of union, but she was able to convey the differentiation in more than abstract terms. The encounters (vistas) between the soul and God she describes as the preliminary steps to the betrothal proper.[1] The soul has enjoyed already the consciousness of God's loving presence.[2] Now it is time for further meetings between God and the soul "that they may learn to appreciate each other better."[3] The beloved gains a clear understanding of the predilection that is hers. She responds with full determination to do only God's will. The Divine Lover reciprocates with a suggestion "that they shall meet together[4] and he shall unite her with Himself." As in the case of earthly lovers, the giving and receiving of gifts is no longer important. They are on the threshold of the gift of self, and "the Spouse being Who He is," in the course of such brief encounters, makes his beloved more worthy and even more desirous of the coming betrothal.[5]

---

[1] *Moradas*, V, iv, 2: "Y aunque sea grosera comparación, yo no hallo otra que más pueda dar a entender lo que pretendo, que el sacramento del matrimonio. Porque aunque de diferente manera, porque en esto que tratamos jamás hay cosa que no sea espiritual (esto corpóreo va muy lejos, y los contentos espirituales que da el Señor, y los gustos, al que deven tener los que se desposan, van mil leguas lo uno de lo otro), porque todo es amor con amor."

[2] *Moradas*, V, v, 3.

[3] Cf. Ermanno, *op. cit.*, p. 93. cf. Arintero, *Stages*, pp. 5-27; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christian Perfection*, pp. 1-11; de Guibert, *The Theology of the Spiritual Life,* (New York, 1953) pp. 258-291.

Yet these encounters mark a period of preparation which includes all the trials and sufferings of one who must wait for definitive union with the Beloved. In Teresa's opinion the very fact of one's having known the things of heaven necessitates some type of earthly trials.[1] Having tasted the graces of union in even "one short meeting," a person knows the desolation of what seems to be a protracted absence of the Beloved. As time passes she begins to doubt and suspect the very "encounters." In the midst of such anxiety and tension, the danger of yielding to the temptation of doubt and disillusionment is very real. She is tempted to give in to the suspicion that she has been deceived by the devil, when in fact her suffering should be a test and strengthening of her love.

---

[1] Moradas, V, iv, 3.

[2] Moradas, IV, iii, 4.

[3] Moradas, V, iv, 3.

[4] "Vengan a vistas"; Cf. Efren de la Madre de Dios, Obras Completas, Vol. II, p. 410, footnote. Cf. also Peers, Complete Works, Vol. II, p. 265.

[5] Moradas, V, iv, 3.

> The soul is now completely determined to take no other spouse; but the Spouse disregards its yearnings for the conclusion of the Betrothal, desiring that they should become still deeper and that this greatest of all blessings should be won by the soul at some cost to itself.[2]

Although Teresa details many of the trials of this period immediately preceding the espousals, she does not classify them as precisely as does Saint John of the Cross.[3] Spiritual writers are agreed, however, that the interior trials, psychological and spiritual, which Saint Teresa describes do indeed parallel the passive night of the spirit.[4]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, i, 2.

[2] Ibid.: "Ya el alma bien determinada queda a no tomar otro esposo; mas el Esposo no mira a los grandes deseos que tiene de que se hage ya el desposorio, que aun quiere que lo desee más y que le cueste algo, bien que es el mayor de los bienes."

[3] Cf. Dark Night, II, 1. Peers, Vol. I, p. 67.

[4] Cf. Ermanno, op. cit., p. 159; Marie-Eugene, op. cit., Vol. II, Chs. III-V; Gabriel of St. M. M., St. Teresa of Jesus, p. 87.

XUM

She, too, is describing the sufferings that purify love. For all the while doubt and suspicion of self, misunderstanding from others, consciousness of the absence of the Beloved, alternate with moments of joy and flashes of delight in his Presence. The Spouse-to-Be does not permit his beloved to be discouraged or tried beyond her endurance. His purpose is not mere negative purgation, but a positive preparation for the spiritual espousals. Gradually, in his meetings with her, he assigns to her a more passive role. For short periods during prayer she loses all consciousness of things, of self, and of thought. "God implants Himself in the interior of that soul in such a way that when it returns to itself it cannot possibly doubt that God has been in it and it has been in God."[1]

This expression of the reciprocity of the indwelling describes one of the most intriguing phenomena of the mystical experience: God is in the soul; the soul is in God.

> Abide in me, and I in you.[2]
>
> For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.[3]

The science of the spiritual life explains the paradox in terms of the consecutive stages of development in the life of the soul with God. In the ascetical (purgative and illuminative) stages the soul is "in God"; in the mystical (unitive) state God is "in" the soul:

---

[1] Moradas, V, i, 8.

[2] Jn. 15, 4.

[3] Gal. 2, 19-20.

> There is a time when the soul lives in God, and a time when God lives in the soul. What is appropriate to one state is inconsistent with the other. When God lives in the soul it ought to abandon itself entirely to His providence. When the soul lives in God it is obliged to procure for itself carefully and very regularly, every means it can devise by which to arrive at the divine union. . . . When God lives in the soul it has nothing left of self but only that which the spirit which actuates it imparts to it at each moment.[1]

This theology of the progressive stages of union can be deduced from the scriptural sources, particularly if the 1) purgative, 2) illuminative and 3) unitive degrees are discerned in Paul's 1) "dying to the law" in order to "live to God", 2) being crucified with Christ so as 3) to have Him live "in me." And Teresa's doctrine lends itself to this interpretation. When she speaks of the soul's dwelling in God, it is generally in connection with the state of those yet imperfect in the spiritual life, e.g.:

> Let us imagine that God is like a very large and beautiful mansion or palace. This palace, then, as I say, is God Himself. Now can the sinner go away from it in order to commit his misdeeds? Certainly not; these abominations and dishonorable actions and evil deeds which we sinners

---

[1] J. P. de Caussade, SJ, Abandonment to Divine Providence (St. Louis, 1921) p. 36.

> commit are done within the palace itself--that is, within God.[1]

On the other hand, Teresa's dominant image of the King's dwelling in the palace of the soul refers, in general,[2] to the higher stages of the soul's union with God:

> When Our Lord is pleased to have pity upon this soul, which suffers and has suffered so much out of desire for Him and which He has now taken spiritually to be His bride, He brings her into this Mansion of His. . . . He must needs have an abiding-place in the soul, just as He has one in Heaven, where His Majesty alone dwells: so let us call this a second Heaven.[3]

Experience proves the truth of this analysis. Whereas in the purgative way a person begins to live for God, in the illuminative way he is seeking to live in God, and in the unitive way he experiences God living in him. Yet mystical theology more often than not moves away from the scientific "progression of stages" and mingles the images of the soul's being in God and God's being in the soul. Speaking, with St. Paul, in terms of the supreme unity of love, Saint John of the Cross says:

---

[1] Moradas, VI, x, 3: "Hagamos ahora cuenta que es Dios como una morade u palacio muy grande y hermoso, y que este palacio--como digo--es el mesmo Dios. Por ventura puede el pecador, para hacer sus maldades, apartarse de este palacio? No por cierto, sino que dentro, en el mesmo palacio, que es el mesmo Dios, pasan las abominaciones y deshonestidades y maldades que hacemos los pecadores."

[2] We say "in general" because, as we have seen, Saint Teresa denies to no one--not even the sinner--the privilege of being the "interior castle" of the presence of God. cf. p. 164, above.

[3] Moradas, VII, i, 3: "Cuando Nuestro Señor es servido haber piadad de lo que padece y ha padecido por su deseo esta alma, que ya espiritualmente ha tomado por esposa, primero que se consuma el matrimonio espiritual métela en su morada. . . . Porque ansí como la tiene en el cielo, deve tener en el alma una estancia adonde sólo Su Majestad mora, y digamos, otro cielo. . ."

> In the transformation of those who love, love causes such likeness that it may be said that each is the other, and that the two are one. The reason is that in the union and transformation of love one gives himself into the possession of the other, and each surrenders to and exchanges himself for the other; so each lives in the other, and the one is the other, and both are one by transformation of love.[1]

And Teresa, in a passage at the end of the Vida[2], has reversed her image of the crystal-clear diamond:

> Let us say that the Godhead is like a very clear diamond, much larger than the whole world, or a mirror, like that which symbolized the soul in my account of an earlier vision, except that it is of a far sublimer kind, to which I cannot do justice. Let us suppose, furthermore, that all we do in seen in this diamond, which is of such a kind that it contains everything within itself, because there is nothing capable of falling outside such greatness.[3]

Love defies analysis. Union has its reciprocal aspects; but the closer the union, the less distinctive the reciprocity. Oneness is of the essence of love. And so Saint Teresa can exclaim: "May His Majesty Himself be our Mansion as He is in this prayer of union;"[1] and at the same time she can speak of the mystical marriage as being celebrated in "that Mansion of His, which is the center of the soul itself."[2]

---

[1] Spiritual Canticle XI, 12.

[2] Cf. p. 190, above.

[3] Vida, XL, 10: "Digamos ser la Divinidad como un muy claro diamante muy mayor que todo el mundo u espejo, a manera de lo que dije del alma en estotra visión, salvo que es por tan más subida manera que yo no sabré encarecer; y que todo lo que hacemos se ve en este diamante, siendo de manera que él encierra todo en sí, porque no hay nada que salga fuera de esta grandeza."

The prelude to the spiritual marriage is the sudden, unexpected call to the spiritual betrothal. God awakens the soul. In her efforts to describe this awakening or call Saint Teresa uses the images of a "wound," a "spark," a "fragrance."[3] Although her symbols are clearly the fruit of direct experience, the saint admits their insufficiency for explaining the secrets of God, so different "from all that can be seen or understood here below."[4] In fact, she does succeed in conveying something of the intense desire aroused by the Divine Lover. Here in the Sixth Mansions "the Spouse who is in the Seventh Mansion, seems to be calling the soul in a way which involves no clear utterance of speech, and none of the inhabitants of the other mansions--the senses, the imagination, or the faculties--dares to stir."[5]

Tranquility and joy characterize the Lord's second means of awakening the soul, the so-called locutions or spiritual words. This mystical grace brings with it great certitude. That these "words" are authentically divine is attested by their fruits: They effect a great calm; they never depart from memory; and they carry with them "a living spark of conviction that they will come true."[1] In keeping with the symbol of the espousal, the locutions become occasions for faith and trust on the part of the soul bound to God by love. "Far down in the depths of the soul" God speaks also in "intellectual visions" which leave no doubt in the soul but that "another Lord greater than itself is governing the castle."[2]

---

[1] Moradas, V, ii, 6. [2] Moradas, VII, i, 3.

[3] VI, ii; cf. Saint John of the Cross, Living Flame of Love, St. 1; Dark Night, Bk. II, x.

[4] Moradas, VI, ii, 1 and 3. [5] Moradas, VI, ii, 3.

Later, Teresa describes these visions as neither imaginary nor external, but as a definite consciousness of the divine Presence. She is so certain of this Presence that it is as though His Majesty were habitually walking at her side. Such consciousness arises "not from those senses which tell us that another person is near us, but in another and subtler way which is indescribable."[3] Now His Majesty has perfected his beloved's desire for him to the point of mystical betrothal. Betrothal with the King of Heaven is celebrated in the Sixth Mansions during rapture of ecstasy. The saint protests that it is impossible to describe this rapture. In order to give some impression of it she returns to the castle image and refers to its closed outer doors.[1] Only the door of the mansion in which God dwells remains open. Within, he unites himself with the soul in a way incomprehensible to all but the two of them; "for when a person is enraptured you can be sure that God is taking her entire soul to Himself, and that as she is His own property and has now become His bride, He is showing her some little part of the kingdom which she has gained by becoming so."[2]

---

[1] Moradas, VI, iii, 8.

[2] Moradas, VI, iii, 13-20.

[3] Moradas, VI, viii, 3.

If there seems to be some confusion here between the espousal and the marriage proper, it is only because, unlike the image borrowed from human love, the reality of the divine espousal consists of manifestation and union experienced at the same time. The saint herself alludes to the inconsistencies of using the titles "bride" and "spouse" in connection with the betrothal and of referring here in the Sixth Mansions to the open door of the Seventh Mansion. The soul espoused is, in a sense, already the bride of the immutable God, and the two mansions (sixth and seventh) are, as it were, merged. "There is no closed door to separate the one from one other."[3]

Essentially then, the spiritual espousal is the mutual exchange of a pledge of love. It is much more than a contract. Rather is it--as the "delectable wound," "burning spark," "fragrance," "locutions" and "intellectual visions" indicate--the overpowering victory of love experienced, certain, and indefectible. The jewels which the Spouse is beginning to give to His Bride consist in a deep consciousness of the greatness of God, humble self-knowledge, and a true evaluation of all earthly gifts. In other words, the bride has a new and perfect orientation to creatures, to self, and to God. Again, Saint Teresa takes delight in the permanence of these divine gifts which rests on the fidelity of her Spouse.

---

[1] Moradas, VI, iv, 12.

[2] Moradas, VI, iv, 9.

[3] Moradas, VI, iv, 4.

The marriage symbol becomes all the more forceful by reason of Teresa's accent on the humanity of Christ.[1] This authenticates the Person to person relationship of the espousal. She does not hesitate to affirm the humanness of the lover's need for the incarnate presence of the Beloved. However exalted and spiritual the espousal which takes place at the heights of the prayer of rapture, it does not preclude but rather necessitates awareness of the Sacred Humanity. The more refined the love, the greater the appreciation of Love Incarnate.[2] Hence, an even greater refinement of love is necessary before the soul arrives at perfect or transforming union. The mystical marriage itself takes place only after further preparation. This consists of a purification whereby the soul is drawn beyond ecstatic union to contemplative union. In the process the bride suffers an apparent separation from her Beloved, accompanied by a most painful desire for him.

---

[1] Moradas, VI, vii, 6-16.

[2] Moradas, VI, vii, 15.: ". . . however spiritual you are, you must not flee so completely from corporeal things as to think that meditation on the most sacred Humanity can actually harm you." For the opinion of a modern theologian on this important point, cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, Prayer (trans. by A. V. Littledale; New York; Sheed and Ward, 1961) p. 215f.

> She is conscious of a strange solitude. . . . She thinks of herself as of a person suspended aloft, unable to come down and rest anywhere on earth or to ascend into Heaven. . . . It is well that great things should cost a great deal, especially if the soul can be purified by suffering and enabled to enter the seventh Mansions, just as those who are to enter Heaven are cleansed in purgatory.[1]

The Seventh Mansion constitutes the heaven of the soul where human fulfillment is accomplished in the mystical marriage with divinity. Saint Teresa distinguishes between the spiritual betrothal and the spiritual marriage: in the latter the spirit is made one with God;[2] in the former, separation is intermittent with union which seems to pass quickly. The saint strains for symbols to strengthen the expression of permanent inner union in the mystical marriage. The union is like rain falling from heaven to mingle with the waters of a river; or it is like a rivulet entering the sea and mingling with its waters; or again like sunlight entering a room by two windows and becoming one light.[3] The first symbol of the raindrops lost in the waters of the river seems to image God's dwelling in the soul. The second figure of the rivulet merging with the ocean can describe the soul's dwelling in God. Perhaps Teresa's "light" image succeeds best in expressing the heights of divine-human love. Here, the one Source is also the one End; that is, the light of God's love is the source of the light which enters from both "windows" (the window of God and the window of the soul) as it is also the one light of the room. There is but one Love.

---

[1] Moradas, VI, xi, 5-6.

[2] Cf. 1 Cor. 6, 17 which Saint Teresa quotes in this connection, Moradas, VII, ii, 5.

[3] Moradas, VII, ii, 4; cf. Chapter IV, p. 117. above.

Teresa speaks in the mystical tradition when she maintains that the spiritual marriage takes place in the "center of the soul," the seventh mansion, God's own mansion. This is the "empyrean," the still "heaven of the soul."[1] Here is perfect peace where the imagination and other soul faculties do not enter. This is no longer a question of detachment of the faculties, but rather of an absorption of the sense faculties. They, too, are caught up in the union of the spirit with Christ who is himself sole cause of ineffable peace. The tranquil joy of his Presence permeates from the center of personal being[2] out to "those who in bodily matters (that is the sense faculties) have to serve the Bridegroom and the bride.[3]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, ii, 4; cf. Garigou-Lagrange, Christian Perfection, pp. 458-459.

[2] Note that Teresa uses the singular "Mansion" on this seventh level.

[3] Moradas, VII, ii, 6.

Biblical Symbolism

In the beautiful elaboration of her wedding image, with overtones from Canticles, Teresa concentrates on the permanence and definitiveness of this celestial union of one's entire being with Uncreated Spirit.[1] The soul, she says, never leaves that center which is the Seventh Mansion. She is as certain of her love and of being loved as she is certain of the word of the Bridegroom. He who has said "Peace be to you," is her peace; "for the words of the Lord are like acts wrought in us."[2] The Lord of the castle has welcomed his bride to the innermost chamber. She who answered his call from within, now united with him, knows his constant presence throughout the castle. Teresa recognizes this as the love-presence of which Christ spoke when he prayed that his followers might be one with him as he is one with the Father; that they might abide in him as he in them.[3]

According to the saint the creative dynamism of love finds its best expression in the symbols of Sacred Scripture:[4] Love's solace resides in the abundant waters given to the wounded heart (Ps. 41, 2); love's joy is in the "tabernacle of God;" (apoc. 21. 3) love's peace is the olive branch (Gen. 8, 8-9)--" the sign that it has discovered firm ground amidst the waters and storms of this world"; love's union is "that kiss for which the bride besought Him." (Cant. 1, 2)[1]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, ii, 7.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Jn. 17, 20-23.

[4] Moradas, VII, iii, 14.

Throughout her treatise on divine-human union Teresa has remained within this biblical symbolism. She participates in the scriptural realization of the Person to person relationship between God and man. God dwells in the castle of man's soul. Man dwells there in God. Their marriage union participates in the archetypal sacrament which is the union of love between Christ and his Church. Already here on earth this transforming union places man in a permanent relationship with God. The union is confirmed, stable, perfect--and yet to be perfected. The spiritual marriage celebrated in the castle of the soul is like the dawn of the full day of eternity. The delectable presence of the Bridegroom is heaven begun on earth.

In her use of the dwelling symbol of Saint John and of the marriage symbolism of Canticles, Saint Teresa does more than borrow a mode of expression. She makes her own the scriptural tradition of the word as a dynamic symbol: "The words of the Lord are like acts wrought in us."[2] Her doctrine and its symbols provide a true exposition of the function of symbols: Union with God, its reality and meaning are concretized in the castle and spouse symbols. The latter are signs whose reality and meaning are "wrought in us."

---

[1] Moradas, VII, iii, 13.

[2] Moradas, VII, ii, 7; cf. Is. 55, 10 ff. and 1 Thes. 2, 13.

The soul is a castle solely because the King dwells there. The divine Sun illuminating her inmost being imparts to the saint her uniqueness and translucence. The presence of the Spouse makes the soul the delight of God who created her in his image and likeness. The divine presence perfects this likeness; impels the soul to enter into herself in order to share his identity, to become one with him by mutual communication of love and knowledge. She is raised up to God to transcend her own existence, to achieve the perfection of that personal existence in him. The soul united to God symbolizes in her own reality his higher reality. She is a symbol of God, the sign and effect of his presence and of his activity.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Our purpose in undertaking this study of the Interior Castle has been to explore the theology of the divine indwelling as presented to us in the mystical symbolism of Teresa of Avila. By analysis of the basic symbols employed by Teresa we have sought fresh insight into the mystery of sanctity, that is, the mystery of human fulfillment in communion with God in the Person of Christ.

The task has involved an appreciation of the value of religious symbolism as a manifestation of religious experience and as a sense of spiritual development. Our investigation has led us from a consideration of the nature of symbols as participants in the reality which they express, through an outline of the development of Teresa's major symbols, to a reflection on their power and meaning. Reflection upon the symbols of the soul-castle and of the mystical marriage has given us a new vantage point from which to view mystical experience as an intense representation of the divine-human relationship.

Adopting Teresa's simple characterization of the mystical life as the Gift of God in personal exchange for the self-gift of man, we have viewed mysticism as the highest expression of the God-man encounter, as the life of Christ in man--ever active, dynamic, apostolic. Somewhat after the fashion of her successive penetration into the "mansions" of the inner life, we have studied the symbolic content of Teresa's Interior Castle in the ever-widening circle of the historical, theological, cultural and psychological significance of its symbols.

Specifically, we have traced the castle and spouse symbols to their origin in the religious consciousness of humanity and in Sacred Scripture. We have followed their development in patristic literature, in mystical writings as well as in the language of modern psychology. We find universality in the use of the temple-castle symbol and of the king-spouse symbol. Yet, we discover in Teresa's use of them a unique, personal and unifying element. Teresa's symbols rise from the depths of her Christian religious consciousness as well as from the depths of her subjective consciousness, and from the realm of the collective unconscious. They have their origin, too, in the personal and vicarious experiences of her life, in her friendships, her readings, her prayer, and in the contours and the culture of sixteenth century Spain.

The importance of her symbols in the presentation of her spirituality rests upon the fact that the symbols partake of the reality of the spirituality which they make visible and effective. Teresa's spiritual doctrine cannot be detached from its symbols. It cannot be fully understood apart from its symbols. The symbols constitute both substance and form of the Interior Castle. In symbolism the "inner" and "outer" reality merge, after the way of the Teresian castle whose "walls" are the human person and whose "interior" is the many-mansioned palace which the human spirit must penetrate in order to find God and itself; or like Teresa's "Spouse" who dwells in the castle and is himself the soul's dwelling place. The castle and the spouse symbols do not have meaning; they are meaning: the mystery of Christ dwelling in his creatures, sharing with humanity the perfection of divine-human union.

Unencumbered by psychological theories, philosophical or theological systems, Teresa's spirituality reaches us with a charming spontaneity. Feminine intuition and practical common sense channel her exquisite contemplative consciousness into forms suited to the Christian mind of all cultures and of every age. The analysis of her symbols uncovers a single dynamic structure for the life of man with God, the Pauline structure which transcends subsequent "schools" of theology to arrive at the heart of the Christian mystery which Teresa lived intensively: "Your life is hid with Christ in God."[1] Teresian symbolism enters into and participates in this human life-task of re-creating man in Christ to the image of God. Her spirituality is not so much a science as it is an art.

---

[1] Col. 3, 3; cf. Moradas, V, ii, 4.

When Teresa speaks of prayer she speaks of encounter with the God who is never far from us, who, in fact, is within us. Prayer is both the means and the expression of union with God. It structures the mansions of the soul and evidences the soul's correspondence to the love of the divine Spouse. Prayer is inseparable from apostolic activity. The latter is the aim of prayer, the goal of the contemplative life. At first, mystical prayer coincides with supreme renunciation of everything outside of God. But once the "things of the world" are transcended by the love of God, all things are seen in true perspective. They are centered in God, as the freedom and dignity of personal existence is centered in him, and as apostolic activity is centered in him.

In her treatment of prayer and of its broader context, the "inwardness" of man, Teresa does not make her castle a "space" within us, prepared by us, into which God comes. Rather she describes the castle and its interior depths as the creation of the Spouse who dwells in his work and invites his creature to union with him. Created by God, the interior castle has depths of inwardness never fully plumbed. The creature shares in the limitlessness of the Creator.[1] The "Christ within us" originates and forms the fulness of our being; and every creature is a form of the self-expression of Christ.

Thus, the God who is within, giving being to our being, transcends that being. There is, besides the "inward" dimension, an "upward" thrust in the interior castle. The soul moves from mansion to mansion of its own being. Again, this is no spatial image. It consists rather in that conviction of the divine Presence,"a certainty which can be put there only by God,"[1] an awareness of God's presence which spurs the soul to strive for even greater "heights" in the divine relationship.[2] It is an upward tension by which God gives the soul "something of His own, which is what His Son had in this life," that love which transcends pain and suffering, taking joy in the Cross, symbol of love of God and of neighbor.[3]

---

[1] Moradas, VII, i, 1: "Pues la grandeza de Dios no tiene término, tampoco le ternán sus obras."

The human spirit in "its own house," like the silkworm in its cocoon, finds the house to be of God's making more than of her own striving. He unites her efforts with his omnipotence until they become one act.[4] Self-fulfillment is in self-transcendence. God himself is the Mansion of the soul as the soul is the symbol of his dwelling. God himself is the Spouse of the soul as the soul is the symbol of his loving.

Complete configuration with Christ, as symbolized in the celebration of the mystical marriage, never excludes the Cross. With Christ, in the Mansion where he alone dwells, the soul experiences the Indwelling Trinity. "He who is joined to God becomes one spirit with Him."[1] And yet, as in the life of Christ, union with divinity imparts "the strength to suffer and to die."[2] The Cross is, in fact, the symbol of divine love and of human response to that love. The Cross is the saint's assurance of her ardent love of God and desire to serve mankind. The "accomplished but not yet completed" aspect of intense Christian existence or of redemptive activity is testimony of true participation in the life of Christ: "It would certainly be a novel idea to think of receiving these favors from God through other means than those used by Him. . ."[3]

---

[1] Moradas, V, i, 9.

[2] Moradas, V, ii, 8.

[3] Moradas, VII, iii, 4-8 and VII, iv, 4-8.

[4] Moradas, V, ii, 5-7.

> We must offer the Lord whatever interior and exterior sacrifice we are able to give Him, and His Majesty will unite it with that which He offered to the Father for us upon the Cross, so that it may have the value won for it by our will, even though our actions in themselves may be trivial.[4]

And so at the center of Teresa's symbolism rests the highly personalized dimension of the presence and activity of God in man. The castle of the soul in which is celebrated the mystical marriage symbolizes the subject, object and principle of self-realization, individuation, or human "wholeness." Christ is "the Lord of the castle," the Spouse who admits the human spirit to full enjoyment of her own symbolic reality.

---

[1] 1 Cor. 6, 17; cf. Moradas, VII, ii, 5.

[2] Moradas, VII, iv, 10.

[3] Ibid., iv, 12.

[4] Ibid., iv, 15: ". . . interior y esteriormente ofrezcamos a el Señor el sacrificio que pudiéremos, que Su Majestad le juntará con el que hizo en la cruz, por nosotras al Padre, para que tenga al valor que nuestra voluntad huviere merecido, aunque sean pequeñas las obras."

Teresa's symbols grasp and express the completeness or wholeness of the human personality as realized in its union with God in Christ. The integrity of body, soul and spirit, internal and external activity in the experience of the divine-human relationship is, in the final analysis, the fulfillment of human personality. This fulfillment finds its manifestation and its meaning in Teresa's mystical symbols --symbols which in their spiritual-physical reality participate in the power of the divine-human relationship toward which they point.[1] We have noted that this power is beyond the symbol and yet the symbol is within this power. Man himself both participates in and points beyond himself to the reality of the divine-human intimacy.

As God lives in his world through the living presence of Christ who unites his divinity with humanity, so the humanity of every person united to Christ present within him continues the expression of God's redemptive presence and activity in his creation. The castle of the divine indwelling and the Spouse of the divine-human union symbolize the special manifestation of Christ in the saint, constituting the very wholeness of the saint's personality. The mystic is but the model of every Christian's personal religious experience. According to the symbolism of Teresa of Avila, human fulfillment is a renewal initiated by God, but dependent upon the receptivity and responsibility of man. The nature of human personality lies ultimately in its relation to God, that is, in the Person of Christ whose Spirit inhabits the human person, deifying him from within, sanctifying him in his own environment and historical setting, steeping him in the life of the Trinity until the human person becomes his unique, true self.

---

[1] Paul Ricoeur has said this well: "The manifestation /by the symbol / is like the condensation of an infinite discourse; manifestation and meaning are strictly contemporaneous and reciprocal." The Symbolism of Evil. (Boston, 1969), p. 11.

As Teresa points out at the beginning, and again at the end of her mystical treatise,[1] man, in himself, in, with, and through Christ, symbolizes, by the mystery of his own existential being and activity, the mystery of the presence and the power and the glory of God. The mystic's personal union with God is both sign and reality of Divine Love.

---

[1] cf. Moradas, I, i, 1 and "Conclusion," 3.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Works of Teresa of Avila

Primary Sources

The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus. Translated from the critical edition of P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, OCD. ed. E. Allison Peers. 3 Vols. New York, 1946.

The Letters of Saint Teresa of Jesus. Tr. and ed. E. Allison Peers, 2 Vols. Westminster, Md., 1950.

Obras de Santa Teresa de Jesús. Ed. Silverio de Santa Teresa, OCD. 3 T. 4 Ed., Burgos, 1949.

Santa Teresa de Jesús: Obras Completas. Nueva revisión del texto original con notas críticas. Ed. preparada por el P. Efren de la Madre de Dios, OCD, (T. I con el P. Otilio del Niño Jesús, OCD; T. III con el P. Oteger Stegginik, O. Carm.) 3 T. Madrid, 1951-59.

Secondary Sources

Auclair, Marcelle. *Teresa of Avila.* Translated by Kathleen Pond. New York, 1959.

Crisógono de Jesús Sacramentado, OCD. *Doctrina de Santa Teresa.* Avila, 1940.

__________. *La Escuela mística carmelitana.* Madrid, 1930.

__________. *Vida de Santa Teresa.* Madrid, 1955.

__________. *Vida y Obras de San Juan de la Cruz.* 4th ed. Madrid, 1960.

Dicken, E. W. Trueman. *The Crucible of Love, A Study of the Mysticism of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross.* New York, 1963.

Etchegoyen, Gaston, *L'Amour divin. Essai sur les sources de Sainte Thérèse.* Paris, 1923.

Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, OCD. Saint Teresa of Jesus. Westminster, Md., 1949.

__________. The Way of Prayer: A Commentary on St. Teresa's "Way of Perfection." Milwaukee, 1965.

Hatzfeld, Helmut. Estudios literarios sobre la mística española. Madrid, 1955.

__________. Santa Teresa de Avila. New York, 1966.

Hoornaert, Rodolphe. Saint Teresa in Her Writings. Translated by Joseph Leonard. New York, 1931.

Izquierdo Luque, Maria Magdalena, CSJ. Santa Teresa de Jesús: Metáforas y Símbolos. Madrid, 1963.

Jimenez-Salas, María. Santa Teresa de Jesús: Bibliografía Fundamental. Madrid, 1962.

Jobit, Pierre. Thérèse d'Avila. Paris, 1964.

Larrañaga, P. Victoriano. La Espiritualidad de San Ignacio de Loyola. Estudio comparativo con la de Santa Teresa de Jesús.

Luis de San José, OCD. Concordancias de las obras y escritas de Santa Teresa de Jesús. Burgos, 1945.

Mancini, Giancarlo G. Espresione letteraria dell'insegnamento di Santa Teresa di Avila. Modena, 1955.

Marie-Eugene, OCD. I Am a Daughter of the Church. vol. 2, Chicago, 1955.

__________. I Want to See God. vol. 1, Chicago, 1953.

Nevin, Winifred. Teresa of Avila, the Woman. Bruce, 1956.

Oechslin, Louis. L'Intuition mystique de Sainte Thérèse. Paris, 1946.

Olabarietta, Sister Miriam T. Influence of Ramón Lull on the Style of the Early Spanish Mystics and Saint Teresa. Washington, D.C. 1963.

Otilio del Niño Jesús. Bibliografía Teresiana (Efren de la Madre de Dios, Obras Completas, t. I) Madrid, 1951. pages 25-127.

Peers, E. Allison, trans. and ed. The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross. 3 vols. London, 1943.

__________. The Complete Works of St. Teresa of Avila. 3 vols. New York, 1944.

__________.Handbook to the Life and Times of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. Westminster, Md., 1953.

__________. Mother of Carmel. New York, 1946.

__________. Saint Teresa of Jesus and Other Essays and Addresses. London, 1953.

__________. Preliminary Studies in the Spanish Mystics. London, 1924.

__________. Studies in the Spanish Mystics. 3 vols. 2nd. ed. New York, 1951.

Ricard, Robert. Estudios de literatura religiosa española. Madrid, 1964.

Ros, Fidele de. Un Inspirateur de Sainte Thérèse: Le Frère Bernardin de Laredo. Paris, 1948.

Silverio de Santa Teresa, OCD. Saint Teresa of Jesus. Westminster, Md., 1948.

Fathers Thomas and Gabriel, OCD. St. Teresa of Avila: Studies in Her Life, Doctrine and Times. Westminster, Md., 1963.

Urbano, Fray Luis. Las Analogías predilectas de Santa Teresa de Jesús. Madrid, 1924.

Van Hove, Leon, OCD. La Joie chez Sainte Thérèse d'Avila. Bruxelles, 1930.

Other Works

Primary Sources

Amadís de Gaula. Libros de Caballerías. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Vol. 40. ed. Don Pascal de Gayangos. Madrid, 1857.

Augustine, Saint. Confessions. Tr. Vernon J. Bourke. (The Fathers of the Church. Vol. 21. New York, 1953.

__________. Letters. Tr. Sister Wilfred Parsons. Vol. IV. Fathers of the Church. Vol. 30.

__________. Enarrationes in Psalmos. Tr. ACW, 29.

Bonaventure, Saint. Itinerarium mentis in Deum. With an introduction, translation and commentary by Philotheus Boehner. St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1956.

__________. The Mind's Road to God. Tr. G. Boas. Indianapolis, 1953.

Catholic Biblical Association of Great Britain, The. The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition. Toronto, 1965-1966.

Jan van Ruysbroek. The Spiritual Espousals. Translation and Introduction by Eric Colledge, London, 1952.

__________. Le Tabernacle spirituel. Paris, /n.d./

Jung, Carl G. The Archetype and the Collective Unconscious. Collected Works, Vol. 9, New York, 1959.

__________. The Integration of the Personality. New York, 1939.

__________. Modern Man in Search of a Soul. Translated by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes. London, 1933.

__________. Psychology and Religion. New Haven, 1938.

__________. Psychology and Alchemy. Collected Works, Vol. 12. New York, 1953.

__________. Symbols of Transformation. Collected Works, Vol. 5, New York, 1956.

__________. Two Essays on Analytical Psychology. Collected Works, Vol. 7, New York, 1953.

Laredo, Bernardino de. The Ascent of Mount Sion. Translated by E. A. Peers. New York, 1952.

Luis de León, Fray, OSA. Obras Completas Castellanas. Próloga y notas por P. Felix García. Tercera ed. Madrid, 1959.

Lull, Ramón. The Art of Contemplation: The Lover and the Beloved. Translated by E. A. Peers. New York, 1925.

Origen. *Homelies sur le Cantique des Cantiques*. Introduction et notes de Dom O. Rosseau, OSB. Paris, 1953.

__________. *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies*. Tr. R. P. Lawson. ACW, 26.

Osuna, Francisco de. *El Tercér Abecedario.* *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*. Vol. XVI. Madrid, 1911.

__________. *The Third Spiritual Alphabet.* Tr. Fr. Cuthbert, OSFC. Westminster, Md., 1948.

Rodrigo el último Godo Romancero general. ed. A. Duran. *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*. Vol. 16. Madrid, 1849.

Secondary Sources

Arintero, Juan Gonzáles. *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church*. Translated by Jordan Aumann, OP. St. Louis, 1950.

__________. *Stages in Prayer*. Translated by Kathleen Pond. St. Louis, 1957.

Baltasar, Hans Urs von. *Prayer*. New York, 1961.

__________. *Presence et pensée: essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Gregoire de Nysse.* Paris, 1942.

Barrachina, Ignatious M., OCD. *Spiritual Doctrine of Saint Augustine*. St. Louis, 1963.

Black, Max. *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy*. Ithaca, N. Y., 1962.

Bouyer, Louis. *Christian Humanism.* Translated by A. V. Littledale. Westminster, Md., 1959.

__________. *Rite and Man.* Tr. M. Joseph Costelloe. Notre Dame, Ind., 1963.

__________. *The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers*. Tr. Mary P. Ryan. New York, 1963.

Bowra, C. M. *The Heritage of Symbolism*. New York, 1961.

Butler, Cuthbert. Western Mysticism. 3rd. ed. New York, 1967.

Cassirer, Ernst. An Essay on Man. New York, 1953.

__________. The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. 3 vols. New Haven, 1961.

Caussade, Jean P. de, SJ. Abandonment to Divine Providence. Tr. J. Ramière, SJ. St. Louis, 1921.

Cayré, Fulbert. La Contemplation augustinienne. 2nd. ed. Paris, 1954.

Cerfaux, Lucien. La Theologie de l'Eglise suivant Saint Paul. Paris, 1965.

__________. Le Chretien dans la theologie Paulienne. Paris, 1962.

Congar, Yves M. J. The Mystery of the Temple. Translated by R. F. Trevett. Westminster, Md. 1962.

Connolly, Terence L., SJ. St. Bernard on the Love of God. Westminster, Md. 1951.

Danielou, Jean, SJ. From Shadows to Reality. Tr. Wulstan Hibberd. Westminster, Md. 1960.

__________. God and the Ways of Knowing. Tr. Walter Roberts. New York, 1957.

__________. The Presence of God. Tr. Walter Roberts. Baltimore, 1964.

__________. Primitive Christian Symbols. Tr. Donald Attwater. Baltimore, 1964.

__________. and Herbert Musurillo, eds. From Glory to Glory, Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings. New York, 1961.

Davy, M. M. Initiatión a la symbolique romane. Paris, 1964.

Dillistone, F. W. ed. Myth and Symbol. London, 1966.

Dunne, John S. The City of the Gods. A Study in Myth and Mortality. New York, 1965.

Eliade, Mircea. *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism.* Tr. Philip Mairet. New York, 1961.

__________. *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return.* Translated by W. R. Trask. New York, 1954.

__________. *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries.* Tr. Philip Mairet. 1961.

__________. *Patterns in Comparative Religion.* Translated by R. Sheed. Cleveland, 1963.

__________. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion.* Translated by W. R. Trask. New York, 1961.

__________. and J. M. Kitagawa. eds. *The History of Religions.* Chicago, 1959.

Fromm, Erich. *The Forgotten Language.* New York, 1957.

Garrigou-Lagrange, R., OP. *Christian Perfection and Contemplation.* Translated by Sister M. Timothy Doyle, OP. St. Louis, 1946.

__________. *The Three Ways of the Spiritual Life.* Westminster, Md., 1950.

Gilson, Etienne H. *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard.* Translated by H. H. C. Downes. New York, 1955.

Goldbrunner, Joseph. *Individuation. A Study of the Depth Psychology of C. G. Jung.* New York, 1956.

Gross, J. *La Divinisation du chretien d'après les peres grecs.* Paris, 1938.

Guardini, Romano. *The Church of the Lord.* Tr. Stella Lang. Chicago, 1965.

__________. *The Faith and Modern Man.* Tr. Charlotte Forsyth. New York, 1952.

__________. *The Humanity of Christ.* Tr. Ronald Walls. New York, 1964

__________. *The Focus of Freedom.* Tr. Gregory Roettiger. Baltimore, 1966.

__________. Pascal for Our Time. Tr. Brian Thomas. New York, 1966.

__________. The World and the Person. Tr. Stella Lang. Chicago, 1965.

Guibert, Joseph de. The Theology of the Spiritual Life. New York, 1953.

Guitton, Jean. Jesus, the Eternal Dilemma. Tr. Donald M. Antoinel. New York, 1968.

Harned, David B. The Theology of the Arts. Philadelphia, 1968.

Hostie, Raymond, SJ. Religion and the Psychology of Jung. Translated by G. R. Lamb. New York, 1957.

Jacobi, Jolande. The Psychology of C. G. Jung. 6th ed. New Haven, 1962.

Johnson, F. E. Religious Symbolism. New York, 1955.

Ladner, Gerhart B. The Idea of Reform. Cambridge, Mass., 1959.

Legrand, Lucien. The Biblical Doctrine of Virginity. New York, 1963.

Lepee, Marcel. Le Realisme chretien chez Sainte Therese d'Avila. Paris, 1947.

__________. Sainte Therese mystique, une divine amitie. Paris, 1951.

Lepp, Ignace. The Depths of the Soul. New York, 1966.

Lethaby, William R. Architecture, Mysticism and Myth. London, 1956.

Leeuw, Gerardus van der. Religion in Essence and Manifestation. Tr. J. E. Turner. 2 vols. New York, 1963.

__________. Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art. Tr. David E. Green. New York, 1963.

Lewis, C. S. The Discarded Image. New York, 1959.

Lonergan, Bernard, SJ. Insight: A Study of Human Understanding. London, 1957.

Maslow, Abraham. Religion, Values and Peak Experiences. Columbus, O., 1964.

__________. Toward a Psychology of Being. 2nd. ed. Princeton, N. J., 1958.

May, Rollo, ed. Symbolism in Religion and Literature. New York, 1960.

Musurillo, H. Symbol and Myth in Ancient Poetry. New York, 1961.

Neumann, Erich. The Origins and History of Consciousness. 2 vols. Translated by R. F. C. Hall. New York, 1962.

Otto, Rudolf. The Idea of the Holy. Tr. John W. Harvey. New York, 1968.

Poulain, Augustine, SJ. The Graces of Interior Prayer. Translated by Leonora L. Y. Smith. St. Louis, 1911.

Pourrat, Pierre, SS. Christian Spirituality. Translated by Donald Attwater. Westminster, Md., 1953.

Ramsey, Jan T. Models and Mystery. New York, 1964.

__________. Religious Language: An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases. New York, 1963.

Rahner, Hugo, SJ. Man at Play. Trs. Brian Battershaw and Edward Quinn. New York, 1967.

Rahner, Karl, SJ. Theological Investigations. Vol. 4. Baltimore, 1961-1966.

Saudreau, Auguste, OP. Les Degres de la vie spirituelle. Angers, 1935.

Schillebeeckx, Edward, OP. Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God. New York, 1963.

Scully, Dom Vincent, CRL. A Medieval Mystic. A short account of the life and writings of Blessed John Ruysbroeck, Canon Regular of Groenendale, A. D. 1293-1381. London, 1910.

Stowe, Everett M. Communicating Reality through Symbols. Philadelphia, 1966.

Sullivan, John E., OP. *The Image of God: The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence*. Dubuque, 1963.

Tillich, Paul. *Systematic Theology*. Vol. 1. Chicago, 1967.

Truhlar, P. Carelus V., SS. *Antinomiae Vitae Spiritualis*. Rome, 1965.

__________. *Structura Theologica Vitae Spiritualis*. Rome, 1961.

Underhill, Evelyn. *Mysticism*. New York, 1955.

Urban, W. M. *Language and Reality*. London, 1939.

Vann, Gerald, OP. *The Eagle's Word*. New York, 1961.

__________. *Myth, Symbol and Revelation*. Washington, D. C., 1961.

__________. *The Paradise Tree: On Living the Symbols of the Church*. New York, 1959.

__________. *The Water and the Fire*. New York, 1961.

Walsh, William T. *Saint Teresa of Avila*. Milwaukee, 1943.

White, Victor, OP. *God and the Unconscious: An Encounter between Psychology and Religion*. New York, 1960.

Wilkinhauser, Alfred. *Pauline Mysticism. Christ in the Mystical Teaching of Saint Paul*. New York, 1960.

Zaehner, R. C. *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*. New York, 1961.

Articles and Periodicals

Works on Teresa of Avila

Adolfo de la Madre de Dios, OCD. "Vista panorámica de la vida espiritual según Santa Teresa." *Revista de Espiritualidad*, XXII, 87-98 (1963), 585-608.

__________. "Síntesis teresiana sobre contemplación adquirida," *Revista de Espiritualidad*, XXII (1963), 723-735.

XUM

Alfaro, Juan, SJ. "Persona y gracia," *Gregorianum,* IV (1960), 5-29.

Blas de Jesús, OCD. "Verdadera humildad. En las fundamentos de la ascética teresiana," *Revista de Espiritualidad.* XXII, (1963), 681-722.

Braybrooke, Neville. "The Flaming Heart: a Dialogue for Two Voices," *Aylesford Review* 7 (1960), 253-260.

__________. "Within the Soul: Teresa of Avila and Franz Kafka." *Renascence* 13 (Fall, 1960), 26-32.

Carballo, Juan. "La Estructura del alma según Santa Teresa," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* XXII (1963), 413-431.

Conde, Carmen. "Sobre la escritura de Santa Teresa y su amor a las letras," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* XXII (1963) 348-358.

Efren de la Madre de Dios, OCD. "Teresa de Jesús, sentido de adaptación," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* XXII, (1963), 267-283.

__________. "Doctrina y vivencia de Santa Teresa sobre el misterio de la Santísimo Trinidad," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* XXII (1963) 756-772.

Enrique del Sagrado Corazón, OCD. "Doctrina y vivencia de Santa Teresa sobre el misterio de Cristo," *Revista de Espiritualidad.* XXII (1963), 773-812.

Eulogio de San Juan de la Cruz, OCD. "Principios teológicos fundamentales en la doctrina teresiana," *Revista de Espiritualidad.* XXII (1963), 521-577.

Goodier, Alban. "Two Spiritual Guides of St. Teresa," *The Month* 168 (1936), 11 ff.

Knowles, David. "Contemplative Prayer in Saint Teresa," *Downside Review,* 51 (1933), 201-230; 406-433; 611-633.

Mager, Alvis. "Le Fondement psychologique de la purification passive," *Etudes Carmelitaines,* 23 (1938), 240-253.

Martín de Jesús María. "El Concepto del alma humana en 'Las Moradas' de Santa Teresa," *Revista de Espiritualidad,* XXII (1963), 203-214.

XUM

Muñoz Alonzo, Adolfo. "Concepto del mundo y de las cosas en Teresa de Jesús." Revista de Espiritualidad, XXII (1963), 489-498.

Ortega, Augusto A., CMF. "La Espiritualidad teresiana en su situación histórica," Revista de Espiritualidad, XXII (1963), 578-584.

Peers, E. Allison. "Notes on the Historical Problem of Castilian Mysticism," Hispanic Review, X (1942), 18-33.

Ricard, Robert. "Quelques remarques sur 'Las Moradas' de Ste. Therese d'Avile et le symbolism du château interieur," Bulletin hispanique, 47 (1945), 187-198.

Sinnige-Breed, Afra. "Personality and Psychological Development of Teresa of Avila," Theology Digest, XII (1964) 60-63.

Vaca, César, OSA. "La Personalidad de Santa Teresa de Jesús," Revista de Espiritualidad, XXII (1963), 225-237.

Other Works

Aramendia, Julio, CMF. "Las oraciones afectivas y los grandes maestros espirituales de nuestro siglo de oro. La escuela Franciscana: Vble. Bernardino de Laredo," El Monte Carmelo, XXXVI (1935), 387-395.

Bowen, Lee. "The Tropology of Medieval Dedication Rites," Speculum, 16 (1941), 469-479.

Boyle, R. "The Nature of Metaphor," The Modern Schoolman, 31 (1954), 257=280.

Cilleruelo, L. "Influencia de S. Agustín en la espiritualidad cristiana hasta la Edad Media," Revista de Espiritualidad, XIV (1955), 125 ff.

Cornelis, Etienne, OP. "Christian Spirituality and Non-Christian Spiritualities," Spirituality in Church and World. Concilium, Vol. 9. New York, 1965. pp. 81-90.

Danielou, Jean, SJ. "The Problem of Symbolism," Thought, 25 (1950), 423-440.

Dulles, Avery. "Symbol, Myth and the Biblical Revelation," Theological Studies, 27 (1966), 1-26.

Johnston, William, SJ. "Defining Mysticism: Suggestions from the Christian Encounter with Zen," *Theological Studies*, XXVIII (1967), 94-110.

Letter, Prudentius de. "Trinitarian Indwelling according to Ruysbroeck," *Heythrop Journal* 2 (1961), 48-54.

Musurillo, Herbert. "History and Symbol: A Study of Form in Early Christian Literature." *Theological Studies*, 18 (1957), 357-86.

__________. "Shadow and Reality. Thoughts on the Problem of Typology," *Theological Studies*, 22 (1961), 455-460.

__________. "Symbolism and Belief," *Thought*, 41 (1966), 485-507.

Tate, Robert B. "Mythology in Spanish Historiography of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance," *Hispanic Review*, XXII (1954) 1-18.

Tillich, Paul. "The Religious Symbol," *Daedalus*, 87 (1958), 3-21.

Vergote, Antoine. "The Symbol," *Philosophy Today*, 4 (1960), 53-71.

Walsh, Thomas. "Menendez y Pelayo on Spanish Mystical Poetry," *Thought*, 6 (1941), 102-121.

Unpublished Sources

Larraona, Arcadio M., *Posito Specialis*: Urbi et Orbi: Concessionis tituli Doctoris et extensionis eiusdem tituli ad universam Ecclesiam necnon Officii et Missae de Communi Doctorum Virginium, in honorem S. Teresiae Abulensis, Virginis, Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum Parentis. Romae, Curia Gen. OCD, 1969.

Turney, Sister Lillian, CDP. *The Symbolism of the Temple in Bonaventure's "Itinerarium mentis in Deum."* Fordham University, N. Y., 1968.

XUM

Sister Marietta Mahoney, S.N.D.

B.A., Emmanuel College, Boston

M.A., Boston College

Diploma: Magister in Scientiis Sacris, Pontifical
Institute Regina Mundi, Rome

Symbolism in the "Interior Castle" of Saint Teresa of Avila

Dissertation directed by Ewert Cousins, Ph. D.

This study is an exposition of the theology of union with God as seen in the symbols employed by the sixteenth century mystic, Teresa of Avila. It is an exploration, through symbols, of Teresa's doctrine on the divine indwelling. It concentrates on the symbolism of Teresa's Interior Castle, the work which culminates and summarizes the doctrine contained in her other works.

Teresa constructed the entire treatise of the Interior Castle by means of two major symbols: the castle of the soul and the spiritual marriage of the soul with God. This dissertation has two complementary concerns: analysis of the structure of personal existence as delineated in the symbol of the soul-castle, and appreciation of the fulfillment of human personality as realized in the symbol of the spiritual marriage.

The dissertation proceeds from a grounding in the nature and function of symbols to a consideration of the meaning of Teresa's symbols by situating them in the various contexts in which aspects of their meaning are revealed. In the light of the research of Mircea Eliade and Gerardus

XUM

van der Leeuw in primitive religious symbolism, the study explores the basic and universal structure of the dwelling and wedding symbols, following this essential structure as it is transmuted in advanced civilizations.

The castle is seen as belonging to the universal class of the symbol of the center and the spiritual marriage as belonging to the imagery of the consmogonic myths of the wedding of divinity with humanity. Successive penetration of the many levels of meaning (historical, theological, cultural, and personal) in the castle-Spouse symbol, sheds new light on Teresa's spiritual doctrine and upon Christian spirituality in general. Reflection on the power and meaning of Teresa's symbols gives a new perspective on mystical experience as an intense representation of the divine-human relationship. Teresa's mystical symbolism emerges from a single dynamic structure, essentially the Pauline structure expressed in the statement: "It is no longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2, 20).

The castle and Spouse symbols, as employed by Teresa have their origin in the religious consciousness of humanity and in Sacred Scripture. Developed in patristic literature, in Christian mystical writings, as well as in the psychological depths of human nature, they receive a unique personal and unifying element in Teresa's use of them. Teresa's symbols rise from the depths of her Christian religious consciousness as well as from the realm of the collective unconscious. They have their origin, too, in personal and vicarious experience: in her friendships, her readings, her prayer, and in the contours and the culture of sixteenth century Spain.

Because Teresa's symbols partake of the reality they manifest, they are important vehicles for presenting her spirituality. In her symbolism "inner" and "outer" reality merge after the way of her castle whose "walls" are the human person and whose "interior" is the many-mansioned palace which the human spirit must penetrate in order to find God and itself; or like her "spouse" who dwells in the castle and is himself the soul's dwelling place.

Seen in the light of her symbols, Teresa's theology of the divine indwelling can be summarized as follows: As God lives in his world through the living presence of Christ who unites his divinity with humanity, so the humanity of every person united to Christ present within him constitutes the expression of God's redemptive presence and activity in his creation. Man in himself, in, with and through Christ, symbolizes, by the mystery of his own existential being and activity, the power and the glory of God.

XUM

VITA

Sister Marietta Mahoney, S. N. D. (Eileen Mary Mahoney), daughter of Stephen H. and Marietta R. (Kelly) Mahoney, was born on April 5, 1922 in Somerville, Massachusetts. She attended St. Joseph's High School, Somerville and was graduated in June, 1939.

She entered Emmanuel College, Boston in September 1939 and received the degree Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, in June 1943. She was accepted as a graduate student at Boston College in 1943, receiving a Master of Arts degree in 1951.

In August 1947 she entered the Order of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and was professed in January 1950. From 1950 to 1954 she taught Religion in Notre Dame high schools in Somerville and Dorchester.

From 1954 to 1957 she attended the Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi in Rome, and received the diploma, Magister in Scientiis Sacris in June 1957.

In September 1957 she was appointed to the faculty of Theology at Emmanuel College, Boston.

In 1969, upon completion of a three-summer Institute on Religious Life at St. Xavier College, Chicago, Illinois, she received the certificate of the Canon Law Society of America.

In September 1965 she was accepted as a graduate student in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Fordham University, where she majored in the History of Christian Thought under the mentorship of Dr. Ewert Cousins.